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NEW STATESMAN

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NEW STATESMAN

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The end of Labour's beginning?

ATTACKING THATCHERISM is poor sport these days: the target makes scarcely any attempt at intellectual self-defence. The important question is whether Labour is yet within measurable distance of bringing together the political forces required to abolish Thatcherism. The answer, in the aftermath of last weekend's conference is: not yet. But the signs are not all bad. To express hope requires some effort of will. It is not yet evidence of insanity.

First, the party has not split. The simple point needs repeating when so much punditry assumes that our politics would be somehow revitalised if Labour's 'marxists' were to separate from the 'social democrats'. Leaving aside the fact that the labels are hopelessly devalued ones — because of the political illiteracy of Fleet Street, and because of Labour's own addiction to ritual name-calling — the blunt fact is that English conservatism would probably achieve permanent hegemony if Labour's awkward bedfellows were to separate. Our position on this, if apparently eccentric, has at least been consistent: namely, that the proper, permanent condition of a radical party is one of internal warfare. Success is to be achieved not by pre-empting or suppressing battles, but by ensuring that they are fought according to reasonable conventions and are ended by locally-effective peace-treaties.

Labour's continuing problem is not that it is too much divided, but rather that its competing factions still share far too many unwholesome assumptions. Much conventional wisdom alleges that the power-centres of the party are about to be taken over by Bennite, or perhaps Trotskyite, 'moles': as Patrick Wintour showed in some detail last week, this is not true. The left has failed in its present challenge. But the reasons for the failure are more significant than the failure itself.

DURING THE LEFT's heady time last autumn, a *New Statesman* reporter pointed out to one of its idealistic paladins that most of the triumphs of populism he was celebrating — or anticipating — were dependent upon manipulation of grotesquely unrepresentative winning block votes. 'Yes', was the reply, 'but keep quiet about it, because we're winning'.

The idea that the *New Statesman*, merely because it agrees editorially with some of the aims of the left, might 'keep quiet' expresses a curious idea of journalism. More important, the reply exemplifies the sad blend of naivete and cynicism which cripples so much Labour politicking. Even without the aid of the NS, the left's opponents were quite easily able to see that the champions of reform were proceeding by the use of traditional instruments which could as readily be turned to their defeat. Nor is it difficult for any intelligent voter to perceive that no faction within the Labour Party has yet canvassed any constitutional reforms except those calculated to increase its own immediate leverage. Freedom, said Rosa Luxemburg, is always for the other fellow: a good Marxist lesson which the British Labour Party has yet to learn.

Most of the professed aims of the left are still proper, and still necessary. But if the methods the left adopted last year had been successful, the result would have been the disintegration of the party. Quoting Churchill is a serious vice among leader-writers, and it is not one we propose to become addicted to. He was right all the same when he said that 'the grass grows green on the battlefield, but never on the scaffold.' You cannot produce democracy by fixing block votes, and perhaps that lesson has at last been learnt.

For all that, a Labour revival is not to be expected just yet. There cannot yet be any leadership credibly separated from the failure and corruption of the Wilson-Callaghan years.

The candidates of the right say that those years were after all not so bad (even, perhaps, triumphant.) It is no doubt tempting to think that this revision of history might be validated through comparison with Thatcherite fanaticism. But what if Mrs Thatcher turns out (as we suspect) to be an opportunist rather than a fanatic? What is to stop her ditching Sir Geoffrey, Sir Keith and the other money-cranks, and producing her own sanitised Callaghanism?

The left attempts to separate itself from the immediate past by demands for 'full-blooded socialism' — but the effect is not so much to remedy the British electorate's present suspicion of socialism, as to provide further evidence for doubt about the personal consistency of its spokesmen. The left does not have any heroes available who can be shown to have renounced the fruits of office *before* they went obviously rotten in Callaghan's hands (those who have done so, like Eric Heffer, are treated as eccentrics rather than as heroes). To denounce Callaghan when he is out of office makes it more and more difficult to justify *de facto* support given to him as Prime Minister scarcely more than a year ago.

To be sure, this is a difficult situation, but politics is about seeing difficult situations coming. Putting it bluntly, what the left needs now is one or two senior figures who could say they quit Callaghan's train before it went unequivocally off the rails. The lack of any such immediately available leadership means that the left still faces a long, perhaps painful journey before it can establish moral authority.

Many people thought, last summer, that the autumn of 1979 would see some decisive leadership contest within the Labour Party. We thought not. It still looks to us as though there is a long way to go before there can be a politically effective Labour Party. But some of the pitfalls in the early stages of the journey have been avoided, and that is a matter for relief, if not celebration.

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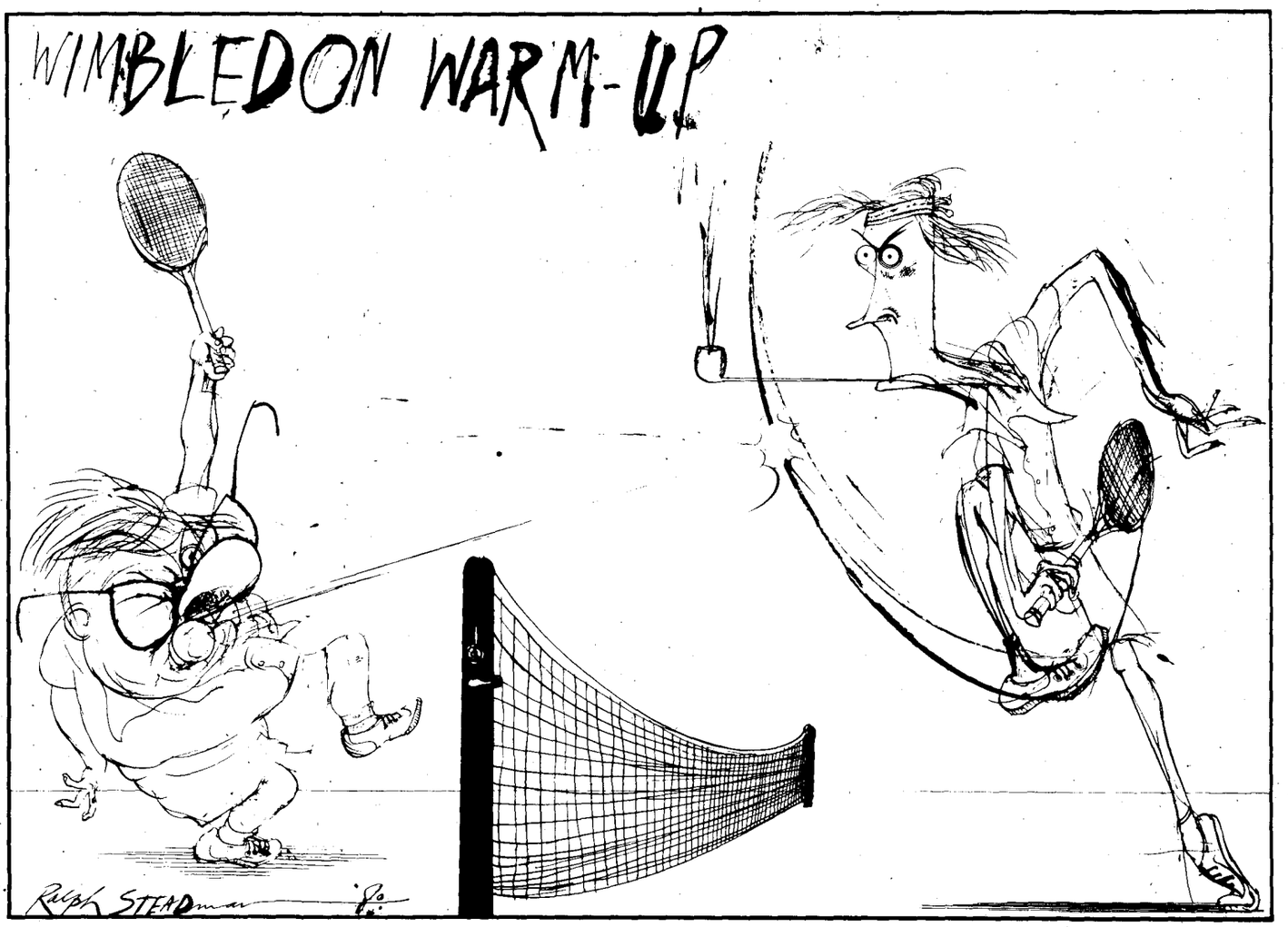

NOTES

Pacific takeover

Christopher Price writes: The unilateral declaration of independence by Jimmy Stevens in the island of Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides is neither sudden nor unexpected. It is a deliberate attempt by French and US commercial interests to overturn last year's democratic elections in the Condominium, to postpone independence indefinitely for the group as a whole, to consolidate the continuation of a French presence in the Pacific and to create a secure tax haven for the funds of the US lunatic Right. The primarily anglophone Vanuaaku Party, led by Father Walter Lini, had made strenuous efforts last year to broaden its base and win a majority not only in the group as a whole but also in the regional assemblies of the Espiritu Santo and Tanna islands where a majority of the foreign-backed dissidents had their strength. The results were a surprise and a disappointment to the French.

Ever since, a group of French *colons* have persuaded the Paris government to make difficulties and postpone independence. Though supporting independence on paper, French minister, Paul Dijoud, said of the New Hebrides this week: 'only peaceful negotiation could solve their problems.' In the circumstances of the present insurrection, such a statement is virtual surrender to the rebels.

It is not fair, however, to blame Dijoud for the present situation: because of the influence of the rebels' Paris lobby, every decision has to be referred to Giscard for ratification. Nor is it simply a settler lobby: the Giscardians themselves are still deeply committed to France's continuing imperialist world role. They know that New Hebridean independence would make it more difficult to hold New Caledonia (with its nickel and even more settlers than the New Hebrides) and Polynesia (with its nuclear testing sites): the insurrection is not altogether unhelpful to their longer term aspirations.

The money behind the rebellion has come substantially from the Phoenix Foundation (US-controlled, but now based in Amsterdam) and the Libertarians — an odd US political grouping.

They have had little difficulty, over the last ten years, in convincing Jimmy Stevens, that he has the backing and the ability to do a UDI: for the moment it seems they have been proved right. The revolt, however, could not have got off the ground without a unique mixture of official French compliance and British infirmity of purpose. Last November — and again as recently as this March — Foreign Office ministers were making unequivocal promises to protect law and order and preserve the New Hebrides' territorial integrity: this week Peter Blaker, our minister in charge, came back from Paris empty handed — except for a promise to 'negotiate' with a regime that has already taken over, thrown the British police force out and allowed the French to proceed unmolested. The British government has capitulated to the unacceptable face of French Pacific imperialism.

IPC journalists return

Our correspondent writes: Bland reports in the national press that IPC is to reinstate 1500 journalists and resume publication of over 200 magazines after a five-week hiatus failed to convey the magnitude of the defeat inflicted on one of Britain's most hawkish employers. IPC admits that it has lost over £10 million in profits and £20 to £25 million revenue; and in order to induce a traditionally non-militant workforce to return to work the company has been forced to concede virtually full back pay for the period of the dispute.

The journalists had been sacked on 25 April following the breakdown of negotiations over a salary claim (NS 23 May). IPC and its parent company, Reed International, clearly banked on a rapid capitulation (Reed chief executive Sir Alex Jarratt has taken a lead in the CBI initiative to tilt the balance of industrial power back towards management). However, the sackings produced the opposite reaction — a total refusal to negotiate unless all those sacked were reinstated with full back pay.

In effect this is what IPC has conceded. The full payroll for the month of May is to be run. The NUJ tossed in a fig leaf in the shape of an agreement to refer final payment for 7 of the 26 working days of the dispute to the 'full services' of ACAS, but the terms of reference mean that IPC will be lucky to retrieve more than a token amount.

Even that understates the full extent of the débâcle. The original question — the salary claim — has still to be settled, yet IPC appears to have already fired the main weapon in its armoury (the sacking of all the journalists) in what was essentially a side show. More than that, it has alienated its natural allies, editors and senior journalists, by throwing them into the arms of the NUJ, and it has rendered irrelevant those euphemistically described as middle management. The cohorts of publishers, publishing directors, managing directors and the like spawned by IPC have been reduced to little more than glorified messenger boys, handing out dismissal notices while the real decisions were being taken by a handful of top management most of whom never meet a journalist from one year to the next. In short, IPC has produced in a month what the NUJ had failed to achieve in a decade — a united work force and a demoralised management.

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Asset-stripping at BR

Mick Hqmer writes: The government will be introducing a Bill to strip British Rail of its profitable assets early in the new session of Parliament. The Bill will set up a holding company for three of BR's subsidiaries: Sealink, British Transport Hotels and the British Rail Property Board. British Rail will retain a minority interest in the new company, but the major shareholder will be the government. The government's stake in the company will then be sold to private shareholders.

Under the government's proposals there will be absolutely no guarantee that the holding company's rather mixed bag of assets will be kept together, so further rationalisation seems inevitable. Among the likely beneficiaries is European Ferries, which, with Sealink, operates the vast majority of the cross channel ferries. (The chairman of European Ferries is the Tory MP for Dorking, Keith Wickenden.) Thus the government's plans to roll back the public sector and increase competition are likely to produce a virtual monopoly on cross channel traffic.

While investors will no doubt be eager to get their hands on the profitable parts of the company they will be no less keen to get rid of any loss-makers. One early casualty is likely to be the Gravesend to Tilbury ferry service, for under the Bill the new company will have no statutory obligation to run this, or any other service. The company will be able to withdraw the service at a moment's notice. At present, under obligations inherited from nineteenth century railway acts, there would have to be a public inquiry before Sealink could withdraw a service. Under the government's proposals there will be no such right.

But the real prize which the City can hardly wait to grab is the BR Property Board, which has assets of £185 million. Loss of the Property Board has considerable implications for the railways, which would lose the injection of cash from the sale of land that the railways no longer need. So far the government has refused to say whether it will increase BR's subsidy to compensate for this loss of revenue, but the betting is that this will effectively be a hidden cut. The government is also refusing to say whether British Rail will get compensation for this compulsory denationalisation, or, if there is compensation, whether it would count against the railways' cash limits, which would amount to the same thing.

British Rail chairman Sir Peter Parker intends to fight the disposal plans, which would rob BR of around £50 million a year. The government's hatchet man is millionaire merchant banker Philip Shelbourne, who is drawing up the government's plans to hive off British Rail's subsidiaries at Transport Minister Norman Fowler's request. Shelbourne will shortly take up his £53,000 a year job as chairman of the British National Oil Corporation.

BP's Cardiff bargain

Jim Caldwell writes: The windfall profits to be made by property companies and pension funds with interests in leasehold houses have been highlighted by a recent case in Cardiff. Following the death of a 77 year old widow, the £600m BP Pension Trust are the proud owners of what was her home — a terraced house in a street where similar properties have recently fetched up to £16,000.

Like many people in Wales, Mrs Gertrude Scott's home was on a 99-year lease. It expired last September and she had three options — though it is not clear that she was fully aware of them. She could either buy the freehold, extend the lease or become a tenant in her own home. The first course would have meant paying a 'modern' ground rent, perhaps £200 a year compared with the old ground rent of about £5 a year — a 3,900 per cent increase. As it was, Mrs Scott ended up paying £8.50 a week out of her pension as rent to the BP Trust who took over the house.

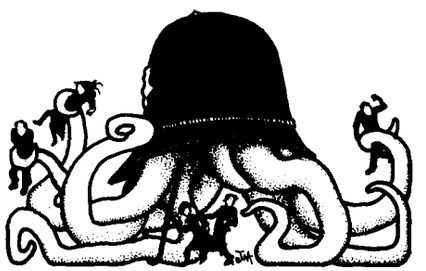
Why she did not extend the lease is not clear — particularly as she seems to have taken legal advice and attended meetings of a local leaseholders' association. Had she done so, her rent would have been less and the trust would have had to wait another 49 years for the house. Her sister, who lives in London, says Mrs Scott was shocked to learn that her home for 36 years was not her own. 'She thought her husband had paid for everything,' she said. She also alleges that the trust's agents, Debenham Tewson, wrote to her demanding that she carry out repairs to the property. This is possible under the 1967 Leasehold Reform Act, but the estate agents say they have no record of any such letters.

BP Pension Trust owns about 6000 freeholds in Cardiff. Thousands more people in South Wales, and others in Birmingham and the North East, live in leasehold properties. In Cardiff many have been unable to pay the prices asked at the end of the lease and others have been trapped in the loopholes of the 1967 Act (see 'Time for a new Reform Act' NS 21/28 Dec 1979). The pension trust say they are concerned only to get the best return for their members. What galls many people in South Wales is that they appear to be squeezing one group of pensioners to pay another.

Amendments to the Government's Housing Bill, accepted during the report stage last month, were dismissed as 'peanuts' by Sue Essex of the Welsh Leasehold Reform Group, which wants to see the whole system abolished. The Bill proposes to reduce from five to three years the residence qualification for purchase of the freehold and replace the Lands Tribunal procedure with new valuation tribunals to arbitrate on the price. It will not give people with extended leases the right to buy the freehold.

Campaigners want the residence qualification abolished and a new formula established for price fixing. At present the freehold price is calculated by the tribunals on the basis of market value of the property. The reform group want a formula which would set the price as a fixed multiple of the annual ground rent, or failing that they say the price should be calculated on the rateable value.

There are signs that the isolated reform groups around Britain are moving to co-ordinate their campaign. The recent Welsh Labour Party conference called for fundamental reforms and the Liberals have promised their support.



Criminal Justice Bill

The committee considering the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill spent last week discussing the police's power to search people. NORMAN BUCHAN continues his series of reports.

THE DEMAND by the police and others to extend the Prevention of Crime Act, dealing with the possession of offensive weapons, to include the right of search in advance of arrest has long been heard in Scotland. It provides an apparently hard-headed and rational statutory covering for the easiest of all populist stances: if you are against search then you are in favour of hitting old ladies in the head and stabbing innocent bystanders.

In the last Labour government's version of this Bill the Tories, along with the present chairman of the Scottish National Party, Gordon Wilson, successfully passed amendments to have this power included. Indeed the one good thing about the last election was that this Bill and these amendments were destroyed in the general mayhem.

We had looked forward with trepidation to the inclusion of this power in the present Bill, and, sure enough, there it was in Clause 4. We were right to be anxious. It had been argued for on the basis of random search. Indeed, that was its rationale. Analogies were brought in on the basis of the existing right to search for the carrying of wild birds' eggs. Statistics of increasing violence were produced. Speeches were made about the innocent lying in a pool of blood because the inhibited constable was unable to search all and sundry in Glasgow dance halls. Above all, the present Solicitor General had made it clear what was sought: 'If a police constable had power to search a person who he believed "may have" — not "does have" — an offensive weapon then that would greatly increase his powers for the good of all and the detriment of none ... Under the amendment [his amendment] the police could search all the people in the dance hall.' Teddy Taylor had been more specific: 'If there was a disturbance in, say, a dance hall, the police should have power to search all those involved and coming out.' Quite apart from this curious obsession with dance halls — presumably only yobboes go there, and certainly not Tory voters — the point was clear. A power akin to random search was what was wanted. And it was on this assumption that the Tory Law and Order campaign was fought North of the border.

But the coming to power does strange things. With his opening words Malcolm Rifkind, the Under Secretary, said he intended that this clause should apply only to the individual on whom suspicion rested: 'We are not dealing with the realm of random search either for the general public or for any individual. There must be reasonable suspicion that on the occasion in question the individual whom the police wish to search is carrying an offensive weapon.'

The Labour amendment sought to make the Minister's words good. If he was saying that there would be no generalised search but only where suspicion had crystallised on a particular individual, why not accept the amendment which sought to change the word 'person' to '*one* person' and 'that person' to 'that *particular* person'? (On such minutiae are civil liberties often necessarily fought.) No, said the Minister. The words were either superfluous or unduly restrictive. The police might, for example, have reason to believe that an offensive weapon is carried by one of a small group. So suspicion would be justly based on each of that group, and each should be searched.

The matter rests. But something important has happened. The Minister has made it clear that it is not the intention of Parliament or Government to allow this new power to be used in the random way it had originally been argued for. It is true that courts pay no attention to that: they interpret the words of an Act, not the intention of Parliament. But police may take another view. Certainly, from now on, those concerned in civil liberties should make it clear that the position remains in doubt. Either the Minister is right and the words prevent random search, or there is such an area of ambiguity that the police should be very chary about using the new power at all. They claimed that the 1953 Act was too ambiguous to be useful. The Minister may well have produced the same result in this.

There were glum faces in the Tory back benches as they heard their Minister talk away their objective. If glumness combines with logic we may yet find one freedom loving Tory sufficiently encouraged to vote with us against Clause 4 as a whole. If that happens, it will only require the Leader of the SNP to vote against his Chairman, and the whole obnoxious provision could be defeated.

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UNIONS
Patrick Wintour

Post Office union suppresses report on gloomy jobs future

Burying the bad news

TOM JACKSON'S UNION is facing a crisis of identity — and not just because it has changed its name this week from the Union of Post Office Workers to the more mid-Atlantic Union of Communications Workers. A confidential report commissioned from an external body by the union's executive (the first it has ever asked for) states that the union will lose 40,000 out of its 190,000 members in the next ten years because of new technology introduced by the Post Office.

According to the Science Policy Research Unit of Sussex University, the job losses will occur mainly in the postal services, and in the latter half of the 1980s. The report contends that the Post Office's own forecasts of 20,000 jobs lost over the next ten years are too optimistic, contradictory and misleading.

The UCW is now divided about how it should respond. The report was finished in mid-January and was due to be presented to the union's annual conference at the end of May. However, Tom Jackson, who has described it as 'gloomy', refused to publish it on the ground that a UCW executive subcommittee was preparing an analysis of it. He also successfully opposed an attempt to call a special conference on the report, as well as a move to impose a total ban on new technology until its effects had been more fully studied.

Many members of the UCW feel their senior officials are insufficiently attuned to the importance of new technology. A new broad left organisation is being formed within the UCW, resembling a successful organisation in the Post Office Engineering Union. This can be expected to campaign hard for a strong response to technological change.

The Sussex report badly states that the Post Office has made two projections for the effects of electronic mail (which is the development most likely to eradicate jobs).

> One is confidential but fairly readily available and gives a low estimate of the likely impact. The other is strictly confidential, gives a higher estimate of the likely impact and is, we believe, the more realistic forecast of the two but is not freely quoted to the Post Office Unions!

The latter forecast shows a 25 per cent loss of postal traffic. This is double the figure of 10-15 per cent made available to the UCW executive and would probably mean 15,000 jobs lost over and above the Post Office estimate. A similar deception, says the report, occurred over System X.

THE LOSS OF JOBS was not the only distributing aspect of the Sussex report. The Post Office, which is largely responsible for providing the infrastructure of the coming microchip revolution, seems to be continuing its poor track record on disclosure of information. The UCW is already angry that last year's board-level worker director experiment has been abandoned. A failure to consult properly with the unions could endanger the smooth introduction of new technology through most of Britain.

In its own ten-year business plan, the Post Office anticipates that the volume of inland letters will remain around its current level of 8,840 items until 1983-4, but will then begin to decline so that by 1988-9 it will have fallen by 16 per cent. Most outsiders, including the Sussex researchers, argue that telecommunications will erode postal traffic by five per cent each year from 1983-4. (Parcels are expected to increase by 38 per cent, overseas mail by 19 per cent and agency work by eight per cent.) Criticising the 16 per cent estimate, the Sussex team points out that the Post Office has assumed a general growth rate of 2.9 per cent between 1985 and 1989 — which is higher than most other forecasts.

Telecommunications — in which the UCW has 50,000 members — is by contrast expected to grow by leaps and bounds. By 1989, the number of telephone connections and stations will have doubled, and 94 per cent of houses should have phones. But UCW jobs are seriously threatened by System X, the new computer-controlled switching and digital communications network. Operators (who belong to UCW) will increasingly have to deal solely with calls that have gone wrong. Nearly four fifths of operator calls will go under System X, and automation in directory inquiries and other departments will further reduce operator's jobs. Eventually, work done on computer voice recognition and generation could, if successful, wipe out operators' jobs.

Growth in 'electronic mail' (systems akin to view data using the telephone system to relay documents and information) provide the greatest long-term threat. It is this development that the Post Office privately estimates will mean a loss of a quarter of their postal traffic, at first in the business sector.

Also of concern to UCW members and banking unions is the growth of electronic transfer of funds. Currently, 95 per cent of all payments are made by cash and 65 per cent of the remainder by cheque; but this will change and particularly damage first class mail. It will eliminate not only the need for work at the Post Office counter, but also mail traffic caused by the need to write and process cheques.

The spread of Optical Character Recognition technology (machines capable of reading printed and typed postcodes for high speed sorting) will reduce employment in sorting offices. The Post Office first made live tests on OCR in 1977. But Britain is some way behind the US and Japan. A quarter of Japanese mail, for instance, is now sorted using OCR. Full introduction of OCR in the 1980s would see at least 5,000 jobs disappear. Most Postmen Higher Grade (sorters) would become computer operators. Postal Officer work would be dominated by the use of VDU's and word processors.

THE SUSSEX researchers have been criticised for not taking into account the possibility of new postal markets. They can claim, in their defence that they have done so, and point to the inclusion in their study of the Post Bus, the Household Delivery Service and the social work role of postmen (partcularly in rural areas). They argue that Household Delivery provides the main hope for expanding the work and revenue of the postal services.

The report concludes that the scale of technological change facing the Post Office makes it essential to draw up a proper negotiating strategy for the next ten years. Leftwingers in the union are fearful that the leadership will simply accept as compensation a small additional payment and a two-hour reduction in the working week. They want a complete halt to the introduction of new technology until a commitment is made to no loss of jobs. The high turnover of post office workers (16,000 people left in 1978) will make this strategy difficult to pursue. The Left will also argue for a 30-hour week by 1985, with a five-day working week linked to a six-day service. The Sussex team claims the Post Office itself is working on the assumption of a 30-hour week by 1990.

The UCW leaders have taken a battering in the past two years and are on the defensive. They have seen the Post Office split between posts and telecommunications, which they opposed on the grounds that the less profitable posts sector would be starved of investment and finances. They have seen a growing threat to the postal monopoly, especially in London. A recent Monopolies and Merger Commission inquiry into the Inner London Letter Post blamed declining productivity on UCW intransigence and the Post Office's failure to provide adequate and suitable capital resources through an earlier and more effective programme of mechanisation. The clear implication was that the union needed a productivity deal and that new technology should be speeded up.

Tom Jackson has been trying to extract a productivity deal from his members for years. In 1979, the UCW annual conference censured the executive for trying to slip a productivity element into the 1979 deal; at a special conference in March this year members threw out proposals for more flexible staffing and the use of casual workers in the summer. But the mood was changing. The combined effect of the Department of Industry's decision to refer the Postal Service to the Monopolies Commission, and the looming problem of new technology, was bringing a change in the mood of UCW members. A ballot decided to overturn conference's rejection of summer

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staff and the London District Council of the UCW — the most militant in the union — negotiated in February a local productivity deal. This move defused some of the impact of the Monopolies Commission report when it came out at the end of March. At this year's annual conference, Jackson was able to persuade the members to accept that the London Postal Region productivity experiment should be widened to the whole country.

This month, a new bonus scheme starts. For three months, over 50 offices will try a scheme to pay productivity bonuses related directly to reduced overtime. Once a target level of savings is reached in an office, staff participating receive a weekly bonus of 70 per cent of the savings. This move should significantly reduce the amount of overtime necessary.

POLICE
Phil Cohen

Blair Peach verdict lends greater legal protection to police violence than ever before

The 'effective force' of a fatal blow

IF THE FAMILY of Blair Peach and the Anti-Nazi League want to take matters further after the inquest verdict of 'death by misadventure', several options are open to them. They could take civil proceedings against Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir David McNee for damages arising out of his offers' behaviour in Southall last April; they could sue individual Special Patrol Group officers or units, for offences such as affray; or they could try to have the inquest verdict quashed on a point of law.

If they took the latter course, they would almost certainly contest coroner Dr John Burton's direction to the jury that 'misadventure' implied force to disperse demonstrators, even if the police mistakenly thought Peach was a rioter and hit him with a truncheon. Dr Burton told the jury that police officers faced with a hostile crowd had to use 'sufficient force to overcome all resistance. The force you use has got to be effective.' The question of what was 'reasonable', he said, force was for the police themselves to decide at the time.

It was this that led critics after the inquest to talk of the SPG having a 'licence to kill', because they would always know they would be protected by law, however aggressively they had treated demonstrators.

Mr Lloyd, coroner in the Kelly inquest, said misadventure was 'an unlooked for mishap, an untoward event, neither expected nor desired'. Sibqhat Kadri, a practising barrister and also president of the Pakistani Standing Conference, says Lloyd is right and Burton is wrong: 'People are not excused from criminal liability when they cause someone's death just because they are mistaken. If you use extra force which is not reasonable that is manslaughter; completely unreasonable force would be murder. Misadventure means there is negligence on the part of the deceased and the jury ought to have been told this. If the police think he is a rioter and use normal force then it's accidental death. Even then the duty of care lies with the police to avoid causing serious injury and to distinguish between rioters and non-rioters.'

The coroner should have stressed that the force used ought to be minimum. In fact, Dr Burton talked of 'effective' force to deter or stop, which he distinguished from action which would 'annoy and incite' to further violence. It was not up to the police to define what was reasonable, said Mr Kadri, that was the jury's task. Dr Burton also erred in saying arrests were out of the question under the circumstances.

Roy Peach, solicitor brother of Blair, and a moderate man who radiates a deep belief in the letter of the law, said the verdict was 'inappropriate' because misadventure was a lawful act leading to accidental death and there was no evidence of a lawful act. Unlawful killing was the correct conclusion. As he pointed out in a statement from the family home in Napier, New Zealand: 'A number of witnesses say they saw Blair felled by a policeman in circumstances which pointed to the act being unlawful.'

Harry Podlewski

Inspector Alan Murray

WHATEVER THE inconsistencies of the eyewitnesses in the number of officers involved and the weapon used, the inescapable fact remains that 10 people — fellow ANL activist Amanda Leon and nine local Asians — saw from no more than 20 yards away Peach struck on the head by police. They also saw several other men, women and children attacked by SPG officers who poured out of two vans in a raid which one resident, Mr Joginder Chana, described as 'horrible, terrible, I have never seen anything like it in my life'.

The evidence of the key officers among the 40 members of the SPG at the inquest revealed that when called to give 'urgent assistance' in Southall Broadway they did not really know who was a rioter in Beechcroft Avenue and who was peacefully going home after police took away a cordon which had previously prevented demonstrators leaving.

Sergeant Anthony Lake, asked why he was pursuing people down the road, answered: 'I could only assume the people running were throwing things.' Inspector Douglas Hopkins, commanding number three SPG unit, who apologised for the 'tragic consequences' of directing SPG vans down after demonstrators, told the jury: 'When you're fighting it's possible an officer in keeping people back would not be aware of what he has hit.' He did not withdrawn the word 'fighting' when invited to do so by counsel for the Peach family.

Dr Burton saw the whole clash in Southall as a 'riot situation' in which 'innocent bystanders' such as Blair Peach could get hurt, but ANL lawyer Richard Harvey insisted Peach had to be considered as an individual, not just as part of a rioting crowd. No-one, not even the police, has brought any evidence that Peach was committing unlawful assembly or obstruction when he was hit.

Even if the verdict were quashed and a new inquest ordered, the very structure and rules of a coroner's inquest make it unsatisfactory to deal with controversial complaints against the police involving the role of the SPG and police tactics in Southall. At the Peach inquest confidentiality was claimed so that the jury did not see the contents of the internal police report by Commander John Cass; and ANL and family lawyers did not have police witnesses' statements to help them.

The coroner himself conducted the questioning for each witness's evidence-in-chief, unlike normal court procedure, and discounted the 'profile murder' theory in the middle of the inquest. In addition, the jury had to cope with contradictory evidence from pathologists. Although the jury added riders that the SPG should be more controlled, that power to comment has now been abolished under the Coroners (Amendment) Rules 1980 which leave entirely in the hands of the coroner the right to make recommendations to the authorities to 'prevent further fatalities'.

Home Office Minister of State Leon Brittan, made the case for a judicial or public inquiry in controversial cases when refusing one in the Commons in May following the Kelly misadventure verdict: 'Public inquiries,' he said, 'should be reserved for the extremely rare situations in which matters of general consequence are to be examined rather than rights between parties.' The Blair Peach killing is clearly such a matter, and the National Council for Civil Liberties wants an inquiry along the lines of the Red Lion Square hearing with Lord Scarman in 1974, after Kevin Gateley died.

The revelations in this week's *Sunday Times* by Inspector Alan Murray, who commanded number one SPG unit in Southall, emphasise the dangers of an elite commando-type force which thinks nothing of wading in and asking questions afterwards. And his admission that some officers used inexcusable force with truncheons on people inside a first-aid post at 6 Parkview road just before the Peach incident adds weight to an inquiry call, particularly as several on the receiving end sustained serious head injuries.

The inquest begged many questions, not least about the attitude of police officers 'at the sharp end of the state' when confronted by a whole community which feels itself affronted by a racialist presence. In a tape-recording of police radio messages on the day, which was played in court, one officer was clearly heard by lawyers and clerks to say: 'I saw a couple of spades from the IWA' (Indian Workers Association). But on the written transcript provided by the police the world 'spades' had been deleted and replaced by a dotted line. When this was pointed out, Dr Burton said: 'I've checked and I can't find any difference between the transcript and the tape'.

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A new phase of rebellion

THIS WEEK'S SABOTAGE by the African National Congress of the strategically vital Sasol oil plants signals an important tactical shift in the arena of armed attack. HOWARD BARRELL reports from Johannesburg on developments in black opposition since the Soweto uprising of 1976.

NOT FOUR YEARS after Soweto exploded on 16 June and South Africa's apartheid edifice shook, black children have again marched in protest at their inferior, racially separate education, and workers have downed tools over factory floor issues. The revolt and the reaction appear familiar.

Again, the escalation of the latest schools' unrest has been rapid. Cape Town coloured (mixed race) scholars left their classrooms in late April; their African counterparts in Cape Town's townships went out in sympathy; Johannesburg coloured and Asian students joined in almost immediately, followed shortly by those in Natal. African students forced the closure of Fort Hare University in the Eastern Cape. African scholars in areas of Natal boycotted classes in defiance of the government and Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's powerful Inkatha movement. In Afrikanderdom's heartland, Bloemfontein's black township of Batho erupted in a weekend of clashes with police in which one man died and many others were injured; and police shot two children dead in Cape Town on Wednesday last week.

In the initial stages, the government promised the scholars piecemeal reform — adequate supplies of textbooks and repairs to school buildings, some damaged in what students call the 'war of 1976'. Prime Minister P. W. Botha undertook to appoint an investigation into educational grievances. These concessions may yet satisfy the students' 'short-term demands', but it is a vain hope that the government will satisfy their 'long-term demand' for a non-racial society. Predictably, the government's concessions were accompanied by talk of 'faceless agitators', the ironic cry that the *students* were making politics of their education; this was followed by about 250 detentions and, ultimately, bullets.

Anxious white South Africans now ask when Soweto will erupt, and why it hasn't already done so. The anniversary of 16 June is but a few days away. That Soweto has remained so quiet is a matter for legitimate speculation. One explanation was: 'The kids aren't going to die in the streets again merely to have "bantu education" renamed "education and training".'

Who has, in fact, learnt anything from 1976? The state security apparatus is more sophisticated under the premiership of militarist Piet 'Wapen' (Afrikaans for weapon) Botha than it was in 1976. Crisis management — to the extent that apartheid rigidity allows it — is better than it was under the inert John Vorster and callous Justice Minister Jimmy Kruger, who infamously said 'Steve Biko's death leaves me cold'. There has been some restraint on the part of the security services. But the latest children's revolt has brought to light several significant developments and overdue strategy shifts in black politics. There are indications that these will make a nonsense of Prime Minister Botha's vaunted plan to co-opt a buffer from among the small African middle-class and the coloured and Asian populations, against the millions whom apartheid (and its more recent semantic derivatives) keeps dispossessed in the homelands.

THE GOVERNMENT has come no closer to being able to resolve the economic and racial cleavages. The *ad hoc* nature of reforms has created a black crisis of expectation. Big business, now thoroughly co-opted by talk of reform under P. W. Botha's 'total strategy', seems an even more unlikely force for meaningful change than it has been in the past. What 'change' there has been has generally taken one of two forms. It has been an attempt to pass off semantic adaptation as solution; or it has been an attempt (in the words of Canadian sociologist Heribert Adam) 'to modernise racial domination'.

The latest unrest coincides with the introduction of a new law which will make it illegal to publish names and details of people detained under the country's security laws,unless the police authorise publication. Already, under South Africa's Terrorism Act, a person can be detained incommunicado for an indefinite period. Thus, the new Bill will make it possible for people to disappear from society. This is expected to drive black opposition underground in greater numbers. And, of course, it comes no closer to resolving the society's contradictions.

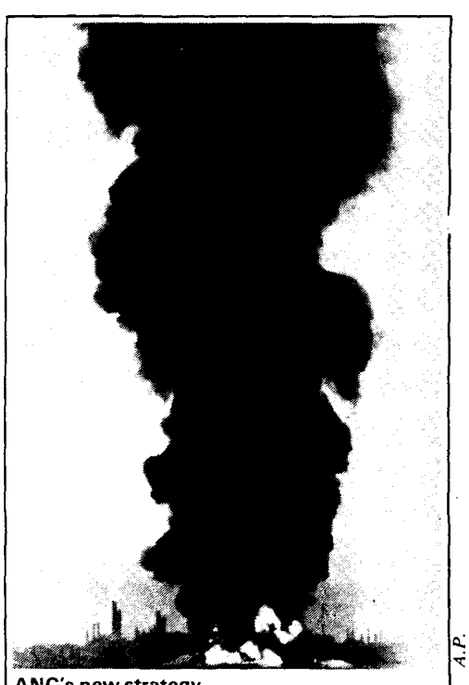
Meanwhile, Botha has come up with new constitutional proposals, which provide for a nominated President's Council to operate in an entirely advisory capacity. It will include white, coloured and Indian members, but no Africans. Seen by some as a precursor of power sharing, the new proposals have, however, met with round condemnation from blacks. It's the old story of too little, too late.

The homeland policy is still centre-stage. Resettlement of surplus labour to these underdeveloped rural areas continues. The Government hopes to create a relatively privileged urban group of Africans, coloureds and Indians, with interests in the central economy, and a greater sense of identity with whites than with their dispossessed rural cousins. But Botha is, simply, losing the 'hearts and minds' battle which his Generals are on record as saying is so crucial to the survival of today's South African state. The country's two million coloureds are, after the past month's events, finally blacks. Previously occupants of a dangerous no-mans's-land between whites and Africans, and viewed by some as 'brown Afrikaners', they now appear to have aligned themselves firmly with the majority African population against the dominant white minority. Their shift comes 25 years, almost to a day, after their removal from the parliamentary voters' roll, and 13 years after Steve Biko and Barney Pityana (now living in London, studying theology at London University) first formulated their black consciousness philosophy and, rather optimistically, included coloureds under the umbrella term 'black'. After their disenfranchisement, the coloureds were given the (toothless) Coloured Persons' Representative Council as a political vehicle. It quickly came under the control of the anti-government coloured Labour Party — only to be widely rejected by the coloured population. And, after a recent stormy meeting between Labour Party leaders and P. W. Botha, the CRC was disbanded. It is now scheduled to be replaced by a Coloured Persons' Council, wholly nominated by the government. In the word of one observer: 'No coloured person will be able to serve on it and lead a vaguely normal life. The community won't tolerate them.'

A POINT OF DEPARTURE in tracing the difference between the present black political trends and those of 1976 is a new 'regionalism' — both geographic and economic. Relatively well-organised groups have developed overtly in areas of the Cape and Natal to mobilise racially-defined communities around limited, tangible issues such as education, rents and bus fares. Polemic — arguably more preponderant than practice in past opposition (particularly in the black consciousness movement) — has been given a back seat.

Groups aspiring publicly to national relevance, such as the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), are growing — as much as a result of a black rethink as of the reaction of the security police. (Ironically, the latter have frequently given organisations more credibility with the black population than their organisational strength might have warranted.)

Young blacks are ridding themselves of the political psychology of martyrdom that has plagued black opposition in the past. Retention of innocence through inaction, or martyrdom by reckless bravado is being seen as a luxury; subjection to organisational discipline is seen as a necessity. Scholars are educating their (increasingly willing) parents in their new



A.P.

ANC's new strategy

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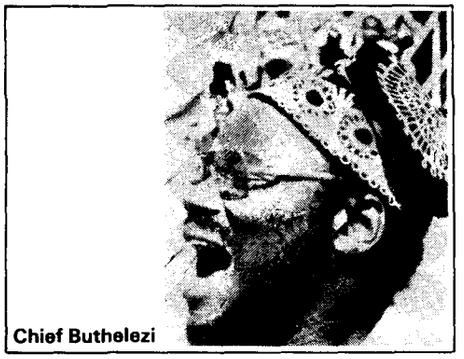
Chief Buthelezi

politics. In this way, the generation gap, which so harmed students' intentions in 1976, is being bridged. The young leadership is now far more difficult to trace than it has ever been in the past. Leading the Cape students is a body called the committee of 81. Their identity remains largely a mystery (although reports indicate that about 20 of the new detainees are members).

The splinter Pan-African Congress in exile virtually self-destructed through infighting last year. The Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (formed last year by exiled remnants of some black consciousness groupings banned in October 1977) appears to have been totally ineffective. Recently BCMA lost the services of three of its most important members: secretary general Barney Pityana, New York treasurer Ben Khoapa, and key Lesotho-based member Tenjiwe Mtintso. Mtintso has joined the African National Congress. The ANC now presents itself as the only coherent external structure for any guerrilla struggle and it is speculated that internal militants wanting to wage the underground struggle will have to bury ideological differences and come under ANC aegis, as there appears to be no alternative.

THE BIGGEST QUESTION MARK continues to hang over Chief Buthelezi's Zulu-based, but nationally orientated, Inkatha Movement. On available evidence, the best organised internal movement (claiming a membership of more than 200,000), Inkatha has committed itself to ANC principles (though not methods) and uses ANC colours. But it appears that Inkatha's limited credibility has suffered substantially over the latest students' boycott. Inkatha critics allege Buthelezi was seen to perform the government's job of controlling Natal African students (there were several clashes between students and Inkatha supporters), and received police protection in the process. Buthelezi, they say, missed a prime opportunity to pledge his support for the students and force the government into implementing a unitary, non-racial education system.

Inkatha spokesmen reject the criticism, maintaining that the students' actions were undisciplined; that they never approached Chief Buthelezi properly for support; and that, in the long run, Inkatha support remains necessary if any anti-government action is to succeed. On the last point, they are probably correct. But even Chief Buthelezi must be asking himself what Inkatha's long-term chances of retaining membership and support would be if the ANC were to broaden its internal organisation and support.

Black trade union groups continue to gather strength. They have organised strictly within legal constraints and have restricted their activities to shop floor issues. As a result, they have survived, despite government threats. For how long remains to be seen. Recently, Manpower Secretary Jaap Cilliers threatened to act against unnamed black unionists. New labour legislation is anticipated which could effectively emasculate black unions and clear the way for 'tame' replacements. Among the latest detentions are a number of black union officials and several labour disputes have coincided with the students' boycott. In Cape Town, African and coloured meat workers have united to force employers to recognise worker-elected committees in all meat firms. In Natal, some 6,000 textile workers downed tools in a wage dispute. Coherent black strike action is now a well-established pattern. But the significance of the latest walkouts lies in the extent of community support for the strikers. In Cape Town, the black community and black butchers have started a (by all accounts, effective) red meat boycott, to finish only when the workers, who have now been locked out, have been reinstated. More consumer action is reportedly planned against white (particularly, Afrikaner) businesses. A bus boycott, reminiscent of the 1950s, began in Cape Town on Monday to protest against fare increases, some as high as 115 per cent. The black community is flexing its economic muscle.

The latest ANC attack, on the Sasol oil-from-coal plants south of Johannesburg, represents a significant departure from past strategies. Priority targets are no longer mere symbols of white authority (such as police stations), but vital installations. The Sasol plants were expected to supply a substantial portion of South African's petroleum energy and other chemical needs by 1984; and the cost of the damage and fuel loss has been estimated officially at R 58 million. Although attacks on only two of the four targets succeeded, the operation revealed the presence of formidably well-trained forces and achieved maximum publicity, with large colour photographs of the blazing plants carried by many newspapers, just as the treason trial of nine ANC guerrillas was beginning. South Africa has never before witnessed so sophisticated, spectacular and costly an act of sabotage. Black opposition seems to have been a better pupil than white government of recent South African history, and to have a clearer idea than in the past of the resources it has at its disposal.

Next week

You write a book — or plan to write one. You look around for a publisher. Each publisher has his own standard printed contract. What does it demand of you and what does it promise you by way of return for your work. What do its terms, usually written in alienating legal language, really mean? What terms should an author ask for if his or her vital interests are to be protected? How can authors combine to protect their interests? What is a Minimum Terms Agreement? In next week's NEW STATESMAN we answer these and other questions in an unprecedented survey of the printed contracts issued by 60 leading British book publishers.

ON THE ROAD TO ARMAGEDDON?

Are we on the brink of a third world war?
Is the global political and economic situation similar to that prevailing before the first or second major conflicts of this century?
This week in The Times Higher Education Supplement Walt Rostow, formerly President Johnson's special assistant for National Security Affairs, asks whether Armageddon can be averted.

Also in this week's paper:

David Lodge on 'The Movement' • Karl Marx and the Anarchists
Oxford's philosophers in Paris

THE TIMES Higher Education SUPPLEMENT

Every Friday

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Poison approved by government

In May, we reported the alarming effects of the weedkiller 245-T on the village of Over Stowey.* Further evidence has since reached us from other parts of the country of cancers and birth deformities apparently caused by dioxin, 245-T's deadly contaminant. As the tragic case histories pile up, Agriculture Minister Peter Walker continues to insist, on advice from the Pesticides Advisory Committee, that 245-T is insufficiently dangerous to justify a ban. JUDITH COOK continues her investigation.

John Hughes

Margaret and David Thomas with their two daughters

DAVID THOMAS is a farm worker on a large company-owned farm in Northamptonshire. In the early 1970s, he and his fellow workers were using the Boots brand of 245-T, 'BBN', to clear hedges. They used back-pack sprays, which sometimes leaked, and they often got soaked with the chemical as they tramped across a half-mile field. When he first took on the job, he had one daughter, who had been born normally to his wife Margaret, following an uneventful pregnancy. During 1972 and 1973, Margaret Thomas suffered two miscarriages between 10 weeks and four months of pregnancy, for which no cause could be found. Eventually she became pregnant again, but there were problems throughout, including a threatened miscarriage. Her daughter, now seven, was born normally, says Margaret. 'She seemed alright at the time, but when we look at photographs now, she does seem white and somehow faded.' At the age of two, Rebecca developed continual stomach pains. After extensive renal surgery it was found that she had a defective kidney and a deformed urinary tract; both conditions had been present since birth.

Margaret has since had another miscarriage and is pregnant again. The baby is due this month and again there have been signs of a threatened miscarriage. She admits she is 'scared stiff'.

David Thomas's fellow worker, Edgar Trehern, was spraying with him back in 1971. He, too, suffered leakages from the back-pack sprays and on one occasion was splashed on the neck with undiluted 245-T. Within a few weeks, he had developed a growth; now he is dead.

Mr Trehern's wife has also died, so the story is taken up by his sister, Mrs Draper. She says that at first they did not know what it was, but then cancer was diagnosed: it was a soft tissue sarcoma. 'The doctors asked him repeatedly if he had been in touch with industrial chemicals and of course he said no; but then shortly before he died they asked if he had ever used any agricultural sprays. He said yes, and they took photographs of his cancer for medical purposes. There was nothing anyone could do — he died within the year. If it was caused through a spray then it must be stopped. No-one should have to suffer such agony. It was a terrible death.'

Ernie Hackney, East Midlands organiser for the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers, has spent months collecting similar case histories. These include two young men who worked for a farm contract spraying company. Neither widow wants publicity, but one of the men, whose first name is Neville, died of cancer four months after being soaked with the spray; and just before his death, his wife gave birth to a baby with deformed legs. The other also died of cancer within months of contact with the spray. Both men, who were in their twenties, had previously had excellent health. Ernie Hackney is pursuing all authorities in his area who are still using 245-T, including the Anglia Water Authority. 'It shows their sense of urgency', he says, 'when I tell you that they decided to refer the matter to their Land Drainage Committee, which doesn't meet until next September. And *that* Committee will only report back to the full board in December. . . '

TWO MPs, Dr Roger Thomas, (Carmarthen) and John Home Robertson (Berwick and East Lothian) have asked questions in the House of Commons of Agriculture Minister Peter Walker — without receiving any satisfactory replies. A colleague of Dr Thomas, Dr Alan

The deadly contaminant

DIOXIN IS NOT an essential ingredient of 245-T. It is produced during the chemical process when the weedkiller is manufactured. It is a 'contaminant', to use the correct term, and it can be located and eliminated from the product before it leaves the factory. Obviously, it costs manufacturers more to take the dioxin out than to leave it in; if they would accept lower profit margins, it could be done.

Just exactly how dioxin affects living tissue is still being investigated, but latest research shows that it attacks the DNA molecule. One theory is that it breaks the molecule into two pieces, or 'unzips' it, then prevents the two pieces from joining together again. A second is that it bends the structure of the molecule in some way, damaging it beyond recovery. In either event, the genetic chain is affected at its first and most basic level.

Tests on animals in the United States have shown that dioxin is teratogenic (causes birth deformities) at levels of one part per million to the body weight in rats, mice and hamsters; at the level of 0.1 part per *billion* to body weight in mice embyros; and at the level of 0.5 parts per thousand million to body weight in rhesus monkeys. This had led the US government's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to say that dioxin is a suspect human teratogen.

Extremely low doses of dioxin are known to cause cancer: 0.1 parts per thousand million to body weight can cause carcinomas of the liver, lung, hard palate and tongue in rats.

In Sweden tests have proved that people exposed to 245-T are six times more likely to suffer from soft tissue sarcoma (normally a rare form of cancer) than average. This sort of evidence has already been put before the UK Pesticides Advisory Committee.

* In the story we carried about the Woodcraft Folk camp at Over Stowey, during which a number of children became ill, there was a printer's error. We told how Mrs Sylvia Grant's daughter had developed cancer, a soft tissue sarcoma. The camp took place in August 1978 and the child's cancer was diagnosed in April 1979, not 1978, as appeared. Some seventy children were involved in the camp; about a quarter of them developed symptoms of severe rash and vomiting. One was Mrs Grant's daughter who died in December 1979.

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Chris Davies

Who markets dioxin?

Boots' Nettle Killer and Woolworth's Touchweeder both contain 245-T; the Woolworth weedkiller also contains 24D, the extra ingredient in Agent Orange — the 'defoliant' used by US forces in Vietnam. Mr Arnold Ridley-Thompson, the only person Boots will allow to talk to the press about 245-T, says: 'We are aware of the media's position on 245-T, but so far as we are concerned there is no reason to doubt the safety of the product so long as it is used properly and the instructions are followed correctly.' He went on to state that if at some date the Ministry of Agriculture said it was unsafe Boots would, of course, suspend its sale. When the *New Statesman* tried to obtain BBN and Nettle Killer several branches claimed that both had been taken off the market. Mr Ridley-Thompson contested this: 'No it has quite definitely not been withdrawn, whatever the various managers of the Boots branches might have told you. You would not find it on sale because we are not making it at the moment, so our branches are running out'. Other brands using 245-T are: Chipman Brushwood Killer (Chipmans); Phortox Scrub and Nettlekiller (Fisons); Trioxone 50 (Plant Protection Ltd.); Silvapron (BP). And others using added 24-D are: Brushwood Emulsion (Diamond Shamrock); Econal (also D. S.); Farmon Brushwood Killer (Farm Protection); Spontox (May and Baker); Stancide BWK 75 (Stanhope); Synchemicals Weed and Brushwood Killer (Synchemicals).

Boots Nettle Killer

IMPORTANT: AVOID spray drift. Very small quantities of spray may cause severe damage to cultivated plants, trees and shrubs. Do not spray young hedges. Treated areas should not be cropped, particularly with salad crops, for six months after treatment. DO NOT contaminate water used for garden purposes. WASH can thoroughly after use, using a detergent solution, preferably hot. Rinse repeatedly with water. Not recommended for lawns. For lawn weeds use Boots LAWN WEEDKILLER.
Store in a safe dry place away from seeds, fertilisers and other chemicals.
LOT 3CW
PRECAUTIONS
KEEP OFF SKIN. WASH AFTER USE. KEEP AWAY FROM PETS AND FISH. STORE IN A SAFE PLACE AWAY FROM CHILDREN.

Williams, is currently investigating reports of deformed babies born to the wives of forestry workers in the Pen-y-groes area of North Wales. Following the publicity given to 245-T, David Thomas began collecting evidence of his own, including cases of other farm workers who had used the weedkiller and whose wives had had deformed babies. He sent off a dossier to Peter Walker, pleading in a covering letter that the Minister should at least suspend use of the chemical pending further investigations, as most other industrial countries had done. He ended on a desperate note: 'I find your dithering completely irresponsible and I plead with you from my heart to order an instant ban from today.'

His plea received a certain amount of publicity, and some three weeks later Mr Walker replied. He was sorry to hear of Mrs Thomas's misfortunes, he said; he was not complaisant about 245-T, but in not suspending its use he was acting on the very best possible scientific advice that was available to him. Previously, the Minister had told a deputation from the NUAAW that he was 'not a man to court easy popularity' by authorising a ban or suspension. Nor is he trying to court easy popularity with *New Statesman* readers. In spite of our repeated requests, he has steadfastly refused to meet us to discuss the matter. He 'is an incredibly busy man', I was told; after pondering our request, he had decided there was nothing to add to his previous statements on the subject as nothing had changed since he made them; and he had, of course, taken the very best possible advice. Last weekend, I received a letter from him, confirming that he saw no reason to suspend the use of 245-T.

Peter Walker appears to rely for his advice solely on the Pesticides Advisory Committee. When other evidence is mentioned to him, he refers to this Committee as though it were a superior authority, and has described its members as 'world famous scientists'.

In fact, 15 of the Committee's 25 members are not scientists at all, but civil servants. The rest are academics, including four professors of agricultural biology. None of them is an expert on the effects of 245-T on animal or human cells. The PAC is known to have reviewed evidence on this eight or nine times; yet its statements on the subject of 245-T are apparently still based on a report issued in 1972 by the Food and Agricultural Organisation. This set a maximum limit for dioxin of one part per million of any substance — *ten times* higher than the current US limit and now considered to be wildly optimistic.

The PAC's views on dioxin are linked with apparent difficulties in measuring minute quantities of dioxin accurately. According to the NUAAW, the measuring equipment at the laboratory of the Government Chemist is accurate to only 20 parts per billion, while that used in research on dioxin in the USA is capable of measuring parts per trillion. Measurements as small as this are now known to be essential in the case of dioxin.

The PAC claims that dioxin disperses within 24 hours of being exposed to light, yet was found to be present still in the ground in Vietnam, ten years after spraying by US troops, and medical authorities consider the population is still at risk of contamination.

Peter Walker says nothing has changed in recent weeks but in fact a good deal has. On 12 May the EEC, in a communique from Brussels, announced a full and immediate inquiry into the latest evidence on 245-T; and in the same week the NUAAW began circulating all its members with a questionnaire to discover who has used the weedkiller and with what results. The Health and Safety Executive has called for further investigations and the Milk Marketing Board has called for a ban.

One of the biggest users, British Rail, last month banned the use of 245-T. A spokesman said a request had come from the NUAAW, via the railway workers' unions. In view of the growing anxiety over its use,' he said 'we have agreed to suspend it as from now.' (British Rail had been buying most of its weedkiller from Chipmans Ltd., and in fact the spray trains were known as the Chipman trains. Chipmans is a subsidiary of Staveley Chemicals; its chairman is Denis Thatcher.

British Rail had already been in trouble with 245-T. On 25 September last year a train spraying another 245-T chemical sprayed a line of allotments on the Stoneleigh Embankment on the Epsom—Waterloo line. The local council had to warn allotment holders not to eat anything at all grown there and the makers paid out an unknown amount in compensation.

In the United States there are now more than 2,000 lawsuits pending against five chemical companies, the largest of which is Dow Chemicals. (Dow is the sole supplier of 245-T in New Zealand and in 1977 mounted a campaign to say how safe it was. A spokesman for the company said they were spending $600,000 a year on publicity.)

Most of the claims against US companies are from Vietnam veterans who have been in contact with the notorious 'Agent Orange' and who want compensation for cancers and for birth deformities in their children. There are claims, too, from civilians who have been in contact with 245-T during extensive spraying. Sixty Australian veterans of the Vietnam war who have fathered deformed children are also pressing claims. A statistical survey has shown that one in four Australian servicemen exposed to Agent Orange had fathered deformed children. The national average is one deformed baby in every 1,000, which is 250 times lower than the veterans' rate.

Insurance companies are expected to face an avalanche of claims once the US courts have made their decision. As a result, firms making 245-T are having increasing difficulty finding insurance cover. If the millions of dollars' worth of claims in the USA turn out to be successful, it will have a devastating effect on the international insurance market. British insurers cover a number of US — as well as British — manufacturers of 245-T.

We do not know how many complaints about 245-T the Ministry of Agriculture has received. If this were the United States, the Department could be forced to make such information available. As the NUAAW points out, the controversy over 245-T has called into question the right of manufacturing companies to withhold scientific and medical information which may be vitally important in assessing the potential danger of chemicals. In the USA, the law requires immediate and full disclosure of this kind of information. Why not here?

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Pop, profit and the IBA

The Broadcasting Bill, which has its final stage in the House of Commons this month, will extend the life of the Independent Broadcasting Authority until the end of the century. Since broadcasting frequencies are a scarce and valuable form of public property, the IBA has the job of deciding who should control them, how much money should be made out of them and what sort of programmes should be transmitted. It enjoys enormous discretionary powers, which it can exercise in virtual secrecy, and if the Bill is passed, as it surely will be, these powers will remain intact. JONATHAN COE and PETER EDMONDS examine the record of the IBA in regulating local radio.

THE INDEPENDENT local radio companies have exploited the public airwaves with such singular purpose that their advertising revenues now amount to £44 million a year. Indeed, they are among the most profitable companies in the country. Not only does the IBA leave them free to feed their audiences an almost unvaried diet of pop and phone-in programmes (which cost next to nothing to produce); but it even *subsidises* them on rare occasions when they branch out into anything more imaginative or complex than a DJ show.

Before awarding an ILR contract, the IBA requires each company bidding for the contract to submit plans indicating what sort of programmes it will broadcast. Invariably, the companies produce an impressive array of news, drama, documentary, education, sport and entertainment — 20 pages or more of programmes designed to interest and involve all age groups in the transmission area. Yet most of what is promised is never delivered. The IBA has an impressive arsenal of programme enforcement regulations, but these serve little purpose, as it has never laid down any minimum requirements for local or specialist radio programming.

The IBA builds transmitters and rents them out to the commercial companies. The only capital investment that stations make is in studio conversion and studio equipment (and even this can be leased rather than bought). Only a handful of companies have spent more than £250,000 on their radio stations; some have spent less than £100,000.

The Authority operates a two tier rental structure for its radio stations, designed to cream off some of the monopoly profits they make. Primary rental is assessed, according to the IBA, on 'a wide range of factors' including 'size, profitability, revenue, costs, return on capital, the economic background of the area and potential for growth'. It varies from £15,000 a year for the small stations (Plymouth Sound, Radio Orwell) to £925,000 for the largest (Capital Radio). There is no published formula for fixing the primary rental: even the contractors themselves don't know how it's calculated. Senior Authority members and officers meet secretly and devise what they consider to be about the right amounts. The IBA's Director General, has explained to contractors that the calculations involve 'not logic but infinite wisdom'. From time to time the IBA revises the primary rental — upwards or downwards. There is a provision in the contracts for it to be linked to the retail price index, but this is not always enforced. As much as £2.65 million will be gathered in primary rentals this year alone.

Secondary rental is more complicated. It is payable when a company's annual pre-tax profits exceed 5 per cent of its net advertising revenue: the rate is 25 per cent of that excess, or 55 per cent when profits exceed 10 per cent of advertising revenue. The IBA's intention apparently is to take funds away from stations with very high levels of advertising revenue, and either spend the money themselves on ILR engineering improvements, or redistribute it to contractors for special projects to enhance the quality of independent local radio. However, as ILR programming requirements are not strictly enforced (as shown in the box on the facing page), very many stations are making profits in the secondary rental bracket, even though their advertising revenue is not exceptionally high. But the collection of secondary rental is hedged around with so many qualifications that many companies do not pay it and a large proportion of that rental which *is* collected goes straight back to the companies. Nonetheless the total amount due in secondary rental is rising so quickly that for 1980 it will exceed primary rental and probably approach £3 million.

AN EXAMINATION of the accounts of the 19 radio contractors for 1978 (the last for which a complete set of accounts is available) reveals that the contractors have no uniform way of dealing with secondary rental, and some don't show it at all. When shown, companies do not always reveal what they owe as well as what they actually pay. As the table shows, there is apparently only one company whose pretax profits are *less* than 5 per cent of net advertising revenue. This is Pennine at 4.9 per cent. In 12 cases the figure is greater than 10 per cent and in two cases, Radio City and

Capital Radio they are over 20 per cent. When, then, does the IBA declare that secondary rental has been incurred by only *seven* companies? (In fact, only six companies mention secondary rental in their accounts, but these add up to a total of £2.02 million.) This contrasts curiously with the figure of £1.9 million published by the IBA). There are several explanations.

First, a company does not have to pay secondary rental until it has recovered all the costs of setting up the radio service. Second, when early profits fall short of 5 per cent of net advertising revenue, this shortfall can be carried forward and set against any future secondary rental liability for a period of six years. This is an interesting example of how the IBA puts the profitability of ILR contractors before their programming obligations. Third, even when companies are profitable, no secondary rental is payable on the first £60,000 of profit. Fourth, and most important, a company can avoid paying secondary rental if it spends the money instead on projects which the IBA considers to be of benefit

How much money they make

Year ending 30th September 1978 (£000)

Radio station	Turnover (indicatges net advertising revenue)	Profits before tax and interest payments	col 2 as % of col 1
Downtown radio (Belfast)	962	95	9.9
BRMB (Birmingham)	1700	327	19.2
Pennine (Bradford)	453	22	4.9
Forth (Edinburgh)	810	132	16.3
Clyde (Glasgow)	2470	428	17.3
Orwell (Ipswich)	512	45	8.8
City (Liverpool)	1631	404	24.8
Capital (London general)	8319	3101	37.3
LBC (London news)	2469	328	13.3
Piccadilly (Manchester)	2317	391	16.9
Trent (Nottingham)	759	52	6.9
Plymouth Sound (Plymouth)	356	44	12.4
Victory (Portsmouth)	513	33	6.4
210 (Reading)	507	75	14.8
Hallam (Sheffield)	900	156	17.3
Swansea Sound (Swansea)	444	74	16.7
Tees (Teeside)	821	114	13.9
Metro (Newcastle)	1287	190	14.8
Beacon (Wolverhampton)	912	60	6.6

NOTE. All these figures are taken from published accounts & some discrepancy arises where for instance 'turnover' is not the same as 'net advertising revenue'. Likewise the profit figure may sometimes include an element of profits from activities other than running the radio station, and these are not subject to secondary rental.
The turnover & profit figures for LBC both include their IRN news syndication service. Separate figures are not published.

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Empty promises, cheap shows

THERE IS A WIDE GAP — which the IBA fails to bridge — between what the radio companies promise to produce when they bid for franchises, and what they eventually deliver. Radio Forth for example told the IBA that local affairs would be their strength: 'We shall devote to them a major part of our resources . . . Apart from our frequent news bulletins, and community inserts, we shall be the platform for a continuing local debate . . . The remit will be, wide covering political, human, social and domestic problems, with the insistence only that they reflect the life of the community . . .' In fact, their programme schedule shows the day starts with 'The Breakfast Show'; then follows 'The Brian Ford Show', 'The Bill Torrance Show' and 'Making Tracks' — some 13 hours a day of record shows. It broadcasts one hour a week of folklore subjects called *Keeper of the Past* and two hours a week of discussion, mainly in studio, on topical and political issues.

Radio Hallam announced that its aim was: 'to produce a multi-strand programme embodying all facets of contemporary life in our rather than a single-strand programme of monotonous predictability and exclusivity which, however rewarding it might be in terms of cash, would not fulfil the intentions of the founders of local independent radio as expressed in the 1972 Act.' Its current programme schedule shows that between 6.00am and 5.00pm every day it offers 'Johnny Moran's Breakfast Show' followed by 'Make Way for Moffat' and 'Ray Stuart's Roundabout'. These are all record shows. It offers one hour a day of chat-based programmes.

The 'Breakfast Show with Les Ross' on Birmingham's BRMB is scheduled as 'frequent time checks, weather forecasts, details of events, transport information, birthdays of famous personalities, Car of the Day' . . . and a similar formula describes 'The Brendan Kearney Housewives Show' and the 'Afternoon Show with Nicky Steel', programmes which total 9½ hours of output a day. Yet in their application for the franchise, BRMB told the IBA that 'The balance within our daily programming will be measured by the ability of this new service to publicise, and thus provide the opportunity for local self expression on a wide variety of activities i.e. topical, educational, religious, children, through local information, local news and views within a popular format, with the development of local talent and participation always in mind. By linking people with diverse interests and drawing attention to these interests BRMB will encourage its listeners to seek out their own balance both in broadcasting terms and in life.'

to the local radio service.

Companies can submit lists of projects for approval by the IBA. They may keep enough money to pay for approved projects; only the remainder is paid to the IBA, in monthly instalments, as secondary rental. As the Managing Director of Radio City, Terry Smith succinctly put it; 'We expect to get about one third of the rental back.' No comprehensive list of these projects is published, nor is the criteria used to assess them, nor the basis on which the companies cost these projects.

Capital Radio is the only company to show enough detail in its accounts to calculate the total spent on projects and paid in secondary rental to the IBA. However, the former is not distinguished from the latter. In 1978 the charge for secondary rental for the year was £1.2 million; the amount actually paid or spent on projects was £0.4 million. It is clear that there is a big cash flow advantage to the stations 'incurring' secondary rental rather than making programmes — because they part with the money much later. There does not appear to be any safeguard to ensure that companies don't simply spend secondary rental on programmes that they are already supposed to make *and pay for with their own money,* under the terms of their contract.

Many MPs have expressed disquiet at the provision in the new Broadcasting Bill which gives the IBA power to make grants to radio contractors. They argue that commercial operations should not have to be subsidised. In fact, the IBA has been handing out subsidies for nearly two years. Radio Orwell, whose profits at £45,000 are a healthy 8.8 per cent of net advertising revenue and who pay no secondary rental, received an IBA grant of £5,000 in 1979 to make a documentary series called *The Right to Work.* The 13-part series apparently cost £800 an hour to produce, compared with Orwell's annual all-in production cost of around £70 an hour.

It is impossible from the published information to get a complete picture of how much ILR programming expenditure is offset against secondary rental and how much is met by grants from the IBA (out of secondary rental revenue). However in total over the four years 1976 to 1979 the companies have incurred secondary rental of well over £5 million.

IT IS IMPORTANT to remember that all this money is being generated by commercial enterprises exploiting a public asset — the airwaves. To that extent these are public funds placed by government in the care of the IBA. And because commercial broadcasters are using a public asset one expects a greater degree of frankness and openess from them and their regulators than found elsewhere in the private sector. In practice one finds exactly the opposite. Quite apart from the inadequacy of the companies' published reports, the IBA refuses to supply information about the full extent of secondary rental.

Section 31 of the IBA Act 1973 requires the Authority to keep 'proper records' in relation to accounts. Although furnishing immense detail on bureaucratic minutiae such as postage and telephone bills, the Authority takes a very conservative view of its obligation when it comes to secondary rental. Not only does it fail to provide full public records of the use of secondary rental, but it also lays no obligation upon the programme contractors to give details of secondary rental payments, refunds or retentions in their own accounts.

Our first appeal for information was placed with the Authority's chairperson, Lady Plowden. She wrote that 'an individual company's share (of secondary rental) would need to be verified by reference to the company's accounts ...' She added that 'It is for the companies to deal in their accounts with this retention and corresponding expenditure in accordance with acceptable accounting practice.' Clearly Lady Plowden has an incomplete knowledge of her contractors accounts and their accounting practices. In fact one wonders, faced with the multitudinous differences between the companies' accounts, how Lady Plowden's officers carry out their regulatory functions.

The IBA's Director of Radio, John Thompson was asked for details of the types of project supported by secondary rental. On 17 January he undertook to provide such a list. Despite frequent appeals the list has never been provided. What is more, Mr Thompson refused permission to the contractors to allow them to provide their own lists of projects supported with secondary rental. An appeal to the Director General, Sir Bryan Young, to get this embargo lifted was ignored. When we asked the IBA Information Department if we could speak to *anyone* in the Authority who could give the IBA view on how the whole system should operate, the Deputy Head of Information, John Guinery, summarily rejected the request with the words: 'There is no one in the Authority prepared to talk about this or any other matter.'

Many of the prestige programmes which the contractors are anxious to boast about are paid for not by the companies, but by the IBA through secondary rental. Capital Radio, the most profitable company in the system, is the station which benefits most from this largesse. The station produces lavish advertisements extolling the virtues of *Operation Drake* in which Capital sponsors young explorers. In fact the money comes from the IBA. A large proportion of the spending on classical music performances and broadcasts is met by secondary rental. Many people have heard of the 24-hour counselling service called Capital Helpline, though few will have realised that it's paid for by the IBA. Piccadilly Radio's recent prestige series, *The Story of Popular Radio,* is paid for by secondary rental.

Meanwhile what is happening to the everyday programming policy of these stations? To most listeners commercial radio means DJs and a playlist of pop records, with time, traffic, and weather checks. The phone-in provides the only regular element of serious speech programming: anything else would require researchers, reporters and producers and facilities to edit, mix and assemble tape.

Most commercial stations are designed on an American pattern in which the studio equipment is principally intended to transmit the output from record turntables. The stations all lack proper facilities for manipulating the raw material of programme production — tape. The lack of such facilities (in the BBC they would be called editing channels) is frequently cited by station staff as a major handicap when working on anything other than live or simple scripted material. There's another consideration. The transmission of more feature material might attract less advertising. In other words, if the IBA had policed the contractors more rigorously and the stations had been kept to their promises, the IBA would have had a much reduced income from secondary rental.

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SOUTH AFRICA
Denys Blakeway & Patrick Wintour

British companies' submissions 'false and misleading'

Starvation wages stay hidden

IN HIS confident reply this week to Michael Meacher's Commons question Cecil Parkinson, junior Minister at the Department of Trade, claimed that all information supplied by British companies operating in South Africa was available for public inspection. There was, as a result, no need to follow Labour government practice last year and publish the names of those British companies failing to pay their South African workers the minimum living level. The EEC Code of Conduct for member states' companies with subsidiaries in South Africa stipulates that workers should be paid 50 per cent more than the miniumum wage. It also calls for union recognition and de-segregation in factories.

It is, however, impossible to tell from the reports which companies are paying black workers below the poverty level. This is both because submissions on wages and fringe benefits are not standardised and because of the misleading and evasive ways in which companies file reports.

The suppressed list of 33 companies currently paying below the line does not come from the companies' own reports, according to Michael Meacher, but from special 3-6 month investigations by British government officials in South Africa coordinated by Mr Vose, the Labour Attache. It would not be possible to detect at least half the 33 companies guilty of paying starvation wages from the reports filed with the Department, due the evasive answers that they have given. The Department of Trade admits that members of the public would have to 'make some considerable effort and cross check in South Africa' to find out the real condition of the workers.

Independent confirmation of the British companies' evasion comes in a report compiled by the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU). The report, published in January this year, says that the submissions under the EEC code of 14 companies, mainly British, are 'false and misleading'. One black workers' union argued: 'If the EEC governments are not going to take any serious action to prevent companies from not complying with the Code of Conduct, either by not reporting or by giving false or evasive reports, then the existence of the Code is not going to be helpful to the people whom the Code is designed to relieve from the grips of labour exploitation.' They point out that trade unions are not allowed to see the reports before they are sent to the Department of Trade. The Ministry in Britain admits that it can make no effort to ensure submissions are accurate nor can it cross check them in South Africa.

FOSATU claim that inaccuracies are to be found in the report of Crabtree (Springs) Ltd, an engineering firm owned by the Berec Group of Britain. For the period of the survey (1977-8) which covered all the firms in South Africa owned by the Berec Group — including Eveready Holdings — the Department of Trade was told its minimum wage was R.151 per month and that all male workers earned in excess of R.330.60. But Crabtree workers say that at the time of the survey the lowest paid worker earned R.135 per month, 3 rand less than the minimum level for blacks as calculated by the Bureau of Market Research of the University of South Africa. The report claims that there is a subsidised canteen. Yet there is no canteen for black workers and the union reports that management have chased away people trying to sell food outside the factory gates. The workers say they have to pay for their own hospitalisation charges, and they contradict the report's assertion that all workers, including immediate dependents, are covered by hospitalisation and free medical supplies. They also claim that the report is inaccurate in saying that there are training schemes for blacks. Finally the company says that although it admits that toilet facilities are segregated they are of identical standard and construction. The workers say the four toilets for the whites have tiles on the floor and two have tiles on the wall. The toilets for black workers have no tiles, are leaking and are filthy. When the *New Statesman* rang the Berec Group for a reply to the Union's allegations a spokesman said that he was unable to comment.

THE LIMITATIONS of the EEC Code of Conduct come out most forcefully in the case of Revertex Chemicals Ltd of Harlow, Essex. The Code states that parent companies should publish each year a detailed report on the progress made in applying the Code. Members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union at Revertex South Africa (Pty) Ltd., Durban say: 'We wrote to the Secretary of State for Trade in Britain asking for a copy of the company's report, assuming correctly that such information was public. The Department of Trade, however, informed us that because of copyright they could not let us have a copy of the report but that a copy was available at the local Consulate General.' On arrival at the Consulate General union officials were informed that they could read the report but that they could not take notes or copy the report. It was only after considerable publicity in South Africa that they were allowed to take notes. When they did see the report they found it 'woefully inaccurate'. They concluded their report with the words, dated July 1979: 'Rather than assisting the South African workers these reports have the opposite effect in that they provide a facade behind which a company may hide its unfair labour practices'. Nobody qualified to comment was available at Revertex in Harlow when the matter was raised with them.

The EEC Code of Conduct makes clear that if black employees decide that their representative body should be in the form of a trade union, the company should accept this decision. To date only nine British companies have recognised independent unions. This is despite the fact that trade unions for black Africans are not illegal and companies are free to recognise them, negotiate and conclude agreements with them.

Martin Bailey

How Oilgate was 'sweated out'

BRIAN SEDGEMORE'S book on *The Secret Constitution* (reviewed on p.860) provides a fascinating insight into the Oilgate scandal. As Tony Benn's PPS at the Department of Energy, Sedgemore was asked to go through the dusty departmental files to discover how the Rhodesian oil embargo had been monitored; he found some tantalising details.

In 1966 Foreign Secretary George Brown suggested that the Sanctions Order should be modified to make the parent oil companies criminally responsible for breaches of the embargo by their subsidiaries — a proposal which might have ensured that Shell and BP kept a rather closer watch over their jointly-owned subsidiary, Shell Mozambique. But George Brown's only support in Cabinet came from Benn, and the idea was quickly dropped.

A remarkable Ministry of Power memorandum reveals another occasion when civil servants sided with the oil companies to defeat a proposal which might have led to an effective embargo. In November 1966 Assistant Secretary Barry Powell wrote a memo for his superior in the Ministry of Power arguing against a new suggestion by the Foreign Secretary that discussions on tightening sanctions should be held with the US and France. Instead, Powell argued, there should be private talks with Shell and BP.

Sedgemore's comments on the incident suggest that there had been a deliberate attempt in Whitehall to by-pass George Brown: 'Mr Powell says in effect that the Foreign Secretary must be stopped before he gets to the Prime Minister. The Foreign Secretary's proposal, says Mr Powell, is his own and runs counter to the advice of the Foreign Office civil servants. Mr Powell recommends that the Ministry of Power should get to the Prime Minister first.' Powell's memo quickly traveled up the hierarchy to the desk of the Minister of Power himself. Richard Marsh then scribbled on the file that 'he never thought sanctions would work and felt that the whole exercise was a charade'.

Barry Powell, who is now director of the Welsh Development Agency, commented last week that he had testified to the Bingham Inquiry. He added: 'I would think I came out of it jolly well.'

Sedgemore has recently talked with a civil servant who worked at the Ministry of Power in the late 1960s. The Beira Patrol, it was realised at the time, was absolutely pointless: the civil servant and *all* his colleagues knew that what they were doing was a farce and all knew that oil was getting through into Rhodesia via subsidiaries of Shell and BP.

In 1978 a Cabinet minister checked government files and discovered that despite Sir Harold Wilson's denials, 'five ministers came to know that oil was getting through to Rhodesia and that sanctions were being busted.' The five were: Wilson himself, Richard Marsh, George Thomson, Michael Stewart, and Tony Crosland.

Some of Sedgemore's most fascinating disclosures concern the way in which the Labour Cabinet tried to bury the Bingham disclosures. On 21 September 1978 one minister mentioned that twelve years earlier Callaghan had opposed George Brown's plan to extend sanctions legislation to cover the parent oil companies. Callaghan 'winced' when this was revealed, and he then spoke out against the proposed Parliamentary inquiry. Home Secretary Merlyn Rees added that if a further inquiry was set up then there was the danger that 'some Labour MPs might criticise civil servants and personnel who worked for the oil companies.' On 12 October there were further discussions on what should be done about Bingham. Sedgemore noted in this diary that Callaghan was 'haunted by the whole thing' and Attorney-General Sam Silkin was 'worried because it is not just small fry who are involved.' Chancellor Denis Healey then chirped in that 'the Government should sweat it out'.

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UNITED STATES
Denis MacShane

'It may seem unethical. That's the way this business is.'

Return of the union-busters

'WEED THEM OUT. Get rid of anyone who is not a team player. And don't wait eight or nine months. I'd like to have a dollar for every time there is a union organising and the employer says "I should have got rid of that rotten bastard three months ago".' Thus a lawyer from a firm called Jackson, Lewis, Schnitzler and Krumpan, explaining to an American 'management seminar' what to do with potential union activists. As the US economy spins into recession — 230,000 workers are indefinitely laid off in the car industry alone — union leaders fear that they are facing a new anti-union onslaught, every bit as determined as the attacks in the 1930s. The difference is that the hoodlums wielding pickaxe handles 50 years ago have been replaced by men who carry Gucci briefcases and call themselves consultants; but the ferocity of the message is unchanged. In a linguistic appropriation that would cause a jolt to the Socialist Workers' Party organisers of the Right to Work marches in Britain, the US 'Right to Work' campaign is a fiercely anti-labour outfit that tries to get individual states to pass 'Right to Work' laws which make union recognition more difficult. They have been successful in 20 states, all of which have a lower per capita income than states without such laws.

For the union to be officially recognised by a company in the US, a ballot of the workers is carried out by a body called the National Labor Registration Board. Unions are rarely able to sign across-the-board recognition agreements which give them representational rights in each plant of a particular company. Instead they have to fight long, hard campaigns at factory after factory.

The theory and practice of 'union-busting' has turned into a $1.5 billion operation with more than 1,000 lawyers or 'consultants' working full-time to keep unions out of plants. The largest union-busting outfit is called Modern Management Methods, which is based in Chicago with 92 professionals full-time on its staff. As well as stopping unions from organising, firms are encouraged to try to get rid of unions that have already won recognition elections. The number of these 'kick the union out' elections has increased by 300 per cent since 1966.

Seminars with such unambiguous titles as 'The Non-Union Employer: Preventive Labor Relations' are organised by the 'Council for a Union-Free Environment', a subsection of the US National Association of Manufacturers. More than 200 US corporations run what are called 'employee economic education programmes'. Even publicly-funded universities are joining the act. In June 1979 the University of Wisconsin's Extension Division offered a three day course called 'Employee Relations for the Non-Union Employers and Managers of Non-Union Organisations and Companies'.

One well-known union-buster, Fred Long, who runs the California-based West Coast Industrial Relations Association, told his clients recently: 'What you do is backdate about six months' memorandums prior to when union activities started. You write your personnel director a letter. You backdate it 15 months. There is no such thing as perjury in a labor board proceeding. To some of you that may seem unethical. That is the way this business is.'

BEHIND THIS anti-union campaign is an increasingly organised right wing which uses both Democrats and Republicans to block pro-union legislation or to promote anti-union federal and state laws or to stop plant organisation by unions. According to Richard Viguerie, who runs America's biggest right-wing direct mail fund-raising operation, 'We are conservatives first. We couldn't care less about party labels. We will use whatever political vehicle is at hand.' Viguerie employs 300 people to watch over and augment his list of four million conservative activists. His computer contains over 200 mailing lists, broken down into different subject areas likely to appeal to right-wingers. During the 1978 congressional elections Viguerie offered to hire his lists to 'approved conservative candidates', promising them 10,000 names likely to offer financial and other help in each congressional district. Viguerie raises funds for the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, the National Conservative Political Actions Committee, the Right to Keep and Bear Arms Political Fund and similar groups.

American unions are legally obliged to form Political Action Committees (PACs) if they wish to raise money from their members for political campaigns and for supporting candidates they favour: the fund must be kept separate from union dues. Four years ago Congress revised the US election law to permit private companies to establish PACs to solicit money from employees. Now there are nearly 1,000 corporate PACs and more than 500 linked to trade associations. Together they gave $34 million to right-wing candidates in the 1978 election while direct business donations amounted to a further $16 million. This compares with a total $14.5 million raised by labour sources.

Right-wing PACs have been behind the present attempt to weaken America's health and safety legislation. The body charged with implementing the United States' tough workplace safety laws is called the Office of Health and Safety Administration (OSHA). A Republican senator, Richard Schweiker, has introduced the OSHA Improvement Act 1980 (again, an extraordinary misuse of language), which is being heavily backed by anti-labour organisations. If it is passed, the Act would exempt nine out of every ten workplaces in the US from OSHA's jurisdiction and render much of its other health and safety work pointless.

The inter-linking of right-wing issues is shown by the connection between anti-union campaigners and the anti-abortion lobby. The chairman of the American Conservative Union's 'Stop OSHA' project is also chairman of an anti-abortion group called 'Stop the Baby-Killers'. However, according to Greg Denier, a union researcher who has examined the Federal Election Commission records, the anti-abortion groups in the US never campaign against pro-abortion candidates who are anti-union. One example he cites is the Texan Republican senator John Tower, who has a strong pro-abortion voting record but otherwise holds consistently right-wing views. During the 1978 Senate elections none of the anti-abortion groups opposed Tower.

Other anti-union organisations shelter behind innocuous titles such as Consumer Alert Council, Save Our Children, Tax Reform Immediately and the National Alliance for Senior Citizens.

An even bigger source of power and money is the secretive band called the Business Roundtable. Its membership, by invitation only, is limited to the top executive in 192 of America's leading corporations. If any of the 192 cannot send their top man (there are no women) to a Business Roundtable meeting no deputy or substitute is allowed to attend. The corporations represented have a combined income equal to about half the Gross National Product of the United States. The Roundtable is publicity-shy and avoids the public lobbying conducted by other groups. A quiet telephone call to the relevant senator or congressman, who understands that his re-election campaign needs generous helpings of corporation money, is the preferred method.

According to American trade unions all these groups are growing in power, influence and financial resources. The nomination and election of a Carter or Reagan is almost beside the point: the unions feel themselves under concerted pressure, and that pressure will continue to grow irrespective of who wins the presidency.

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ISRAEL
Ian Black

Former Defence Minister may have to take credit for strengthening the government

After Weizman, a troika of hawks

IN POLITICS, Ezer Weizman observed last week, there is only a short distance between having your arse kissed and getting it kicked. The Israeli Defence Minister's dramatic resignation and angry exchanges with Menahem Begin now look unpleasantly like a self-administered boot to his own rear. Weizman threatened to resign seven times in three years. And he was deadly serious each time. Now he is in the wilderness, waiting for the phone call that will return him to the fray.

The Prime Minister's Herut (Freedom) Party, the parliamentary outgrowth and ideological heir of the pre-state Irgun Group, has remained solid in the face of the storm. With all the accumulated force and vitriol of three decades of opposition and frustration, Begin has nailed Weizman to a cross of intrigue, inconsistency and treachery.

The ruling Likud coalition, which truly owes its May 1977 election victory to Weizman's aggressive campaigning, is in deep trouble. Washington has made it as clear as it diplomatically can that enough is enough. Begin, however, to the intense irritation of his detractors, has risen to the occasion and despite the opposition of the Democrats, the Liberals, and (to a certain extent) the National Religious Party to his proposed ministerial appointments, he remains the undisputed boss — as well as acting Defence Minister.

If the government does fall — and determined resistance to the Premier's candidates for the Defence and Foreign portfolios could still make this happen — it will be due less to Weizman than to those disgruntled coalition forces which have compromised just too many times, and which may now decide, perhaps on the basis of guarantees from an understandably excited Labour opposition, that early elections are finally on the cards. But if Begin succeeds, and holds his centre, then Weizman will have to take the credit for having strengthened and significantly homogenised the ailing government. With Herut's Yitzhak Shamir (former Stern Gang commander) as an obedient and somewhat bewildered Defence Minister, and the hardline Yitzhak Moda'i of the Liberal Party in the Foreign Ministry, the Premier will lead a troika of hawks who are unlikely, either individually or collectively, to suffer from Weizman's tantrums and capricious criticism of the peace process.

As the *New Statesman* profile pointed out almost two years ago (18.8.78), it has always been hard to place Weizman on the accepted ornithological scale of hawks and doves. And the drama of his departure has made it more difficult than ever to maintain the perspective required on his politically naïve but personally appealing character.

ON EGYPT, he has been consistent. As Defence Minister he slammed doors, cursed horribly, wheeled and dealed and went behind Begin's back to push through the dream of peace with the largest and most powerful of Israel's Arab neighbours. For Weizman, Sadat's move meant the possibility of a peace of the brave. For Begin it was first and foremost a political opportunity, a chance to neutralise and win freedom elsewhere.

Weizman was alone too often. His long and dazzling military career, his genuine sense of camaraderie with his subordinates, and the loyalty he inspired in them did not help him in politics. The move from the war-room and control of one third of the national budget to the parliamentary debate and the party committee did not come naturally. In fact, to be blunt, it hardly came at all. And that is why he is now so isolated.

For a man so deeply and genuinely affected by peace with Egypt, Weizman's greatest problem naturally lay, after Sinai, in the other occupied territories. Perhaps alone among Israel's leaders (after the departure last year of Moshe Dayan) he knew that Sadat would not make do with such an obviously separate peace: thus his stress, in the rash of post-resignation interviews and statements, on Camp David as a process, a dynamic force rather than a static once-in-a-lifetime diplomatic wonder. And thus he was an unwilling hawk in the West Bank. True, he used the apparatus of repression, as initiated by Dayan and Shimon Peres. Yet somewhere there was a sense of hesitation, of unease. Objectively, for sure, an administrative detainee is not comforted by knowing that the Minister who signed the order felt bad about it. But the chances are that Weizman did.

On the eve of his resignation following the 2 May killing of six Jewish settlers in Hebron, the military government appeared to have lost its nerve. The subject was not to the minister's taste. Over a million Palestinians are not a weapons system, nor a controlled fire pattern. And they are not, like many of Israel's other targets, invisible to the naked eye. His departure, the daily paper *Ha'aretz* commented last week, means 'the end of the twilight period' in the occupied territories. Now night will fall.

Weizman told one interviewer, *a propos* readiness to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, that he was prepared to talk 'to anyone ... with any Arab with whom I can reach an agreement that suits me'. He would not oppose a dialogue with 'Arafat's heir', even if that successor (and here he recalled that Sadat inherited the mantle of Nasser) remains a supporter of the PLO. 'In the end', Weizman said, 'we'll talk to the Palestinians.'

His own next move is unclear. For the moment, it seems, he has been badly bruised, although he may still find satisfaction if the ministerial crisis does not die. Weizman has been through hard times before, after his retirement from the airforce and following an unsuccessful attempt several years ago to challenge Begin's domination of Herut. The feeling is that he will pull through.

Historically, Weizman stands apart from the obedient image and ossified structure of the party which he has shaken so badly. Along with his many other recriminations, Begin complained last week that in his three years in office the Defence Minister never once mentioned the teachings of Vladimir Jobotinsky, the father of Revisionist Zionism: the complaint was deadly serious.

Unlike Begin, or his own Uncle Chaim, who kept the Zionist ball in Britain's court until the game was over, Ezer Weizman is not fettered by ideology, loyalty, protocol or tradition. In November 1977 Anwar Sadat changed the face of the Middle East. Weizman changed with it. And that is why he had to part company from a set of squabbling mediocrities who have not yet grasped the enormity and the promise of the transformation.

Jerusalem

Christopher Hitchens

Israel's neo-Nazi martyr

AT THE BEGINNING of May, the Israeli occupation authorities had four independently elected Arab mayors to contend with on the West Bank. Mohammed Milhem, the mayor of Halhul, Fahd Qawassmeh, the mayor of Hebron, Bassem Shaka, the mayor of Nablus and Kharim Khalef, the mayor of Ramallah. 'The big four' were the only civilian spokesmen for Arab nationalist feeling in the region. Today, Shaka and Khalef are in hospital with severe terrorist injuries, and Milhem and Qawassmeh have been deported without charge or trial.

The last two were in London this week, and said that they were not surprised at what had happened to their colleagues. 'The Israeli army does not even turn a blind eye to the extremist settlers', they said, 'it is openly on their side.' The ultra-nationalist *Gush Emunim* (bloc of the faithful) movement has enjoyed Cabinet and military protection in its drive to settle Arab land. Confrontation between it and the Palestinian inhabitants is, in reality, confrontation between the Palestinians and Begin. One peculiar incident goes to demonstrate how this is so.

The deportation of Milhem and Qawassmeh followed riots and disturbaces in the holy town of Hebron, which culminated in the shocking death of six settlers. One almost said 'Jewish settlers' — as all the newspapers did — but it transpired that one of the dead was anything but a Jew.

'Eli Hazeev' turned out to be the pseudonym of an American extreme Rightist with a long record of violence and crime. Having been a sharpshooter in Vietnam, and finding difficulty in 'adjusting' to non-violent life, he had made an opportunist conversion to Judaism and gone to where the action was. *Washington Post* reporters who recall his criminal career in the United States knew him as 'Cray Jim' (his own choice of nickname) and as one of the leaders of a neo-Nazi gang which sported pictures of the Fuhrer!

He took the name Hazeev because it is Hebrew for 'wolf', and he had been known as 'the wolf' by his comrades in arms in Vietnam. Last year, he was arrested and imprisoned for eight months for smashing up Arab homes in the Hebron area. A later arrest for similar offences did not lead to trial. But friends recalled his slogans that 'the only good Arab is a dead Arab'. He invariably carried a gun.

Despite this bizarre background, 'Hazeev' received a proper Jewish funeral, attended by General Rafael Eitan, the Israeli army chief of staff, and senior rabbis. The mourners stoned Arab houses along the route. Members of Kach, the fanatic religious and chauvinist group to which he had belonged, were in evidence with their weapons. Not all Israelis are happy with this latest martyr, and some are asking — as Mayor Milhem has asked — whether Israel can afford to admit neo-Nazi psychopaths as immigrants while denying to so many Arabs the right to live where they were born.

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Northern Diary

☐The re-appearance of T. Dan Smith in North-Eastern politics is imminent. Since completing a three year stretch for his part in the Poulson corruption case Smith has been interesting himself in the welfare of former prisoners. Last year the Labour Party refused to have him back in their ranks, but recently he has been having discussions with an outfit called the Social Democratic Party. An SDP mole tells me Smith will be a 'back-room boy' for the new party which has arisen, with the slogan 'the light and the flame', in Manchester. The same informant says the party plans to field a candidate in the Glasgow Central by-election and T. Dan Smith will be one of the 'big names' going up to support the cause. 'He'll be speaking on the law and order ticket,' says my source.

The party's manifesto must be an important document because much of it is underlined ('The essence of our heritage — the monarchy — *must be retained*'; 'Industry must fully exploit *the silicone chip revolution*'). In the list of aims the party's third priority is to 'enhance community aid by being the only political party to really help the needy in a personal way actively and by direction towards local voluntary organisations' (isn't that what they all do — Christmas bonuses for pensioners and WI handouts?) The fifth and final aim, would you believe, is to achieve a parliamentary majority. Tony Kean, the SDP's 'general coordinator', told me earlier this week: 'We are into people at grass-level. We have lads in Burnley, Blackburn and Scouseland. We are a party left of centre but not the extreme left of centre. We don't operate by direct membership as such.' And to return to the subject of the needy, one other reform buried deep in the manifesto is reckoned by the SDP to be very important: 'Full-time magistrates (use of unemployed counsel).' Kean, a barrister not presently practising, tells me the party's insignia represents the rising sun and the torch of victory.

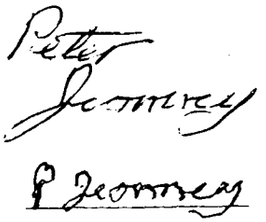
☐The vandalism of Liverpool Football Club's board is equalled only by its squalid harassment of the unfortunate people who live in the terraced houses now owned by the club. This week a planning inquiry has heard evidence about the club's intention to knock down two streets of solid terraced houses to make way for grand extensions, including 34 of those exclusive, glass-fronted boxes to be occupied by the select and wealthy few. Twenty-eight out of more than 60 houses purchased by the club have been bricked up, blighting a settled, happy community. (Most residents have lived in the houses for more than twenty years.) Although the club is clearly uninterested in any rental income — otherwise why brick up the houses? — it has nonetheless decided to fight its tenants and squeeze a few miserable pounds extra out of them in rent. A short while ago the rents came up for review. A rent tribunal set an increase of £6 a month, staggered over three years. Liverpool FC, through their agents, have appealed and won bigger increases of around £10, even though life in one road has been scarred by more than twenty bricked up houses. Like so much else that goes on behind the scenes in professional football it is a sordid tale. I only hope Liverpool City Council, who wisely but not unanimously decided to deny the club planning permission (hence the public inquiry), go one step further and compulsorily purchase all LFC houses. Less realistically and with hand on heart as a Liverpool supporter born only a few streets away, I hope the club gets a most fitting punishment next season — relegation to the second division.

☐For a moment I thought my eyes were deceiving me. In a press release last month the Liberian Shipowners' Council appeared to be condemning Liberia's new regime: 'To Liberian shipowners the events of 12 April could not therefore be seen as one more in a chain of government changes ... what happened afterwards was a shocking act of retribution on the part of the new leaders ...' 12 April, of course, was the date of the coup which was accompanied by the bloodthirsty butchering of political opponents, and the above comments seemed strong stuff indeed from the Liberian Shipowners' Council. This body represents most of the powerful shipowners who fly the Liberian flag of convenience so they may take advantage of taxes at a bare minimum, ignore the stringent health and safety laws of the traditional maritime countries and profit substantially from cut-rate, exploited seamen. The Liberian fleet is actually controlled from a computer in Reston, Virginia, a considerable distance as the crow flies from Monrovia.

However, the Council's true colours were soon evident in their press release. I found no further mention of the grotesque executions carried out by Liberia's new head of state, Sergeant Samuel Doh. The council were happy enough with the regime's 'strong assurances' that 'business was carrying on as normal' and the registration of new vessels was happily unaffected. 'Now, of all times,' whined the press release, 'Liberian shipowners must support the Liberian flag whose benefits appear to remain unchanged.' And, of course, as long as no shipowners ever get strapped to a stake and machine-gunned to death.

☐Tom Hughes took a big step a couple of years back when he changed the course of his career and went from being a garage panel-beater to secretary of Rochdale's Community Health Council. His major achievement since then has been successfully fighting the Area Health Authority's plans to close two hospitals last year. Two months ago a letter from the CHC's chairman, and vice chairman (Norman Smith, Cyril's brother), also signed by six of the 26 council members, went to the Regional Health Authority; it criticised, among other things, his 'conspicuous' association with trade unions (even though his contract required him to maintain close links with the unions). Without waiting for the full Community Health Council to vote, the Regional Health Authority suspended Tom and persisted with an inquiry into the complaints against him — even though twelve council members promptly wrote demanding his reinstatement. The result of the inquiry is due any day now, but the CHC have been notified they should meet early in July and settle Tom's fate themselves. In the meantime, however, while one of its major critics has been hamstrung by suspensions the Regional Health Authority is talking again of closing the two hospitals.

☐These two signatures are currently awaiting comparison on the Director of Public Prosecutions desk. They were written by Peter Jeonney, an 18 year old Huyton youth. The first signature is his normal one: this example



was on a letter last month from Walton Jail where he is serving a three year jail sentence for a crime he did not commit. The second signature, written in a shaky scrawl, appears on the bottom of a statement taken inside Huyton police station on 17 June last year. Jeonney was taken there from outside a nearby pub and charged with assaulting three Merseyside policemen. Above this signature, in the same spidery writing, Jeonney had also written about the statement 'I made it of my own free will.' Whether he did make it of his own free will or whether, as he told the *New Statesman* last year (24 August), he was badly beaten has been investigated by the Leicestershire police. Whitehall sources say the Leicestershire investigation is a model of how this type of inquiry should be carried out. What is clear from it, and from the number of witnesses unearthed, is that if the Merseyside police investigation had been half as thorough Peter Jeonney would not have been charged with assaulting three police officers. Jeonney told Bromborough Crown Court earlier this year about the extensive injuries he received at Huyton police station: 'I was getting asked all the time ... asked names ... every time I said "No, I don't know them" I was getting a punch.' Aside from what should happen to any officers who maltreated Jeonney, or who either perjured themselves or were 'grossly msitaken', there remains the question of his continuing incarceration for something he did not do. Police evidence that he was running between two prone police officers kicking at their heads has been thoroughly discounted by the Leicestershire report. Peter Jeonney should be given immediate bail pending his formal appeal.

☐It's not that I'm anxious to appear before the beak but I must admit I'm longing to know what police action, if any, is going to follow my use of a zebra crossing in January. All those months ago I was using the zebra crossing in broad daylight in Liverpool's city centre when I was twice stopped by a police patrol, accused of 'doing a dance' and warned I would be nicked for loitering. Surely their notebooks must be written up by now.

Rob Rohrer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐Mr Michael Compton, keeper of exhibitions at the Tate, said last night: 'The coal was specially delivered to the Gallery and is returnable. It is in no way spoiled by being a work of art and can be burnt in the normal way afterwards.' — *Daily Mail* (J.R. Soames)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Writing in wedlock

From Julian Barnes

John Arden (NS Letters 30 May) seems eager to miss my simple point about his article on his wife Margaretta D'Arcy. I see I shall have to spell it out. Of course he has the right to argue his wife's case in print, particularly if it seems to him that if he doesn't, nobody else will. But journalists have a basic duty to disclose their interests. If a journalist is alleging the maltreatment by police of a member of the public, and that member of the public is his wife, then he should either (and preferably) get someone else to write the story, or he should mention in his piece the fact that its subject is his wife. It is thoroughly inadequate for Mr Arden to protest that 'I have never concealed the Arden/D'Arcy wedlock'. Either he must have assumed that most readers of the NS knew of his marriage to 'the Irish writer Margaretta D'Arcy' (in which case I think he is being a little over-presumptuous); or he must have assumed that they did not, in which case his silence on the matter seems both ethically dubious and journalistically imprudent.

61 St George's Avenue, London N7

Labour condemned

From Bernard Jones

I used to be sympathetic to Tony Benn, who was the only person in 1976 with plans to invest in British industry, but what is this indigestible lecture (NS 16 May) and, worse, what has he to stand on while he gives it? I do not believe that the Labour Party exists any more (and if I am right this is going to raise certain problems for the NS). I have been waiting thirty years for it to get clean hands so I can join it, but instead people seem to have joined me so that the number of actual members per constituency is laughable. This is largely because there were two types of people who had hopes of it, the idealists and the people who wanted more for themselves, and both have been betrayed. The idealists do not help by splitting into endless factions, while those who want more do not help by wanting less for others. Tony Benn comes in the first category if only because he has enough, just as money, power and prestige gave Queen Victoria such a fine base for idealism. So he complains because the steel industry, though nationalised (a half-truth), treats its workers as a private firm would. I believe that British Steel put up with gross overmanning, but the point here is that Benn proposes no viable alternative. It is not, specifically, for British Steel to retrain its personnel to make something else, or to make something else with retrained staff.

The real condemnation of the Labour Party is that it cannot be bothered to communicate with the public, who, for instance, do not know the Thatcher wrongs you have listed. The fit ones do not realise they are paying for a Health Service which will not help them when they need it (I speak from current experience). Conversely Harold Wilson was happy to condone Vietnam, when I could never meet more than one person who had any time for it, and he a devout churchman wrapped up in the battle against atheistic communism.

The party's duties obviously include running one national newspaper and trying to keep the others within shouting distance of the facts, failing which there is room right now for posters and pamphlets explaining why Thatcher is a Bad Thing, starting with hyper-inflation, industrial decline and Sir Keith Joseph, who is currently withholding £25m from Inmos under the impression that time stands still in very-large-scale-integrated-circuits, just one of his uninterrupted series of mistakes that serves him instead of a career in public life. The Conservatives would not dream of behaving as badly as they do if Labour had approached reasonable standards instead of wasting its time in-fighting to provide material for the Crossman Diaries. All this leaves a country with no obvious role, an unsuccessful Japan, a little island short on friends and resources, a far-flung US state without the privileges. The Japanese of course are going to produce the goods for export and pick up the pieces afterwards, while over here the small section of the UK near London that is not yet a distressed area consists of Kent, where they are feeling those good apple trees to make way for cardboard apples from France, and farming areas where sheep are being put on dairy farming land because the EEC wants to keep the price of milk up.

I should mention that the recent Labour recruiting advertisement you published was so offensive with its unfulfilled idealistic promises that I approached the Advertising Standards Authority over it but Hurrah! they draw the line at political parties, and no wonder. During the Blair Peach inquest one was continually reminded of the stench of Callaghan, with his Maggie-esque remark that Peach should have stopped at home; note the decay since Wilson pronounced that people should be free to protest with no hint that he was going to take a scrap of notice if they did. Politicians.

8E New Cavendish Street, London W1

A laugh or two

From Julian Jebb

Would it be conceivable for, perhaps, just *one* week to have Arthur Marshall as your television critic? It would be entertaining for us to have, however briefly, someone who can both write and also likes a laugh or two.

BBC Television, Kensington House, Richmond Way, London W14

No bed of roses

From Kingsley Amis

John Lucas (NS 23 May) falls into a common error when he has Jim Dixon end up with 'a safe well-paid job'. Jim is offered £500 p.a., exactly what he would then (1951) have got as a second-year assistant lecturer, without contract, superannuation, promise of increment or anything to offset the extra expense of living in London, with increased responsibility and no agreement about hours. Even so, not quite a bed of nails, but not a bed of roses either. And true, he has precious little else on offer, but that is not the issue.

Gardnor House, Flask Walk, London NW3

Africa and Birmingham

From Sylvia E. Wilkins

My attention has been drawn to an article which appeared in a recent copy of your Magazine ('Africa brings peace to Birmingham', NS 11 April). I do not know whether Paul Foot is a regular contributor, or merely an opportunist, however, I presume he was paid, and should therefore have taken a minute checking the details particularly on such an emotive subject. Please note:—

1. Miss Parsons was moved to another school for various reasons, a decision made by the Local Education Authority — not by the *Birmingham Evening Mail*.
2. She did not need two weeks leave. School was closed for the Easter Holidays, but the celebrations continued into the first week of the following term. She asked for 3 (or 4) days unpaid leave.
3. Permission was most definitely *not* granted with great enthusiasm. My first instinct was to say an emphatic NO — but on reflection realised that if a different personality were involved I would have been pleased, and proud, for a Birmingham citizen to be invited as a special guest at such an historical event. Before giving my permission I first inquired if she had presented any problems at her present school.

Teachers are allowed three days unpaid leave in very special circumstances and I therefore decided to allow the extra fourth day and that it should all be paid leave provided that Miss Parson's agreed to regard this as an educational visit. She was told that on return she would be expected to use the knowledge she had gained for instructing the children at her school, and at other schools if so required. It was reasonable to accept that as a good friend, and faithful Marxist Mr Mutusa would want her as his special guest when he was installed as the Speaker.

4. The name is Wilkins — *not* Wilkes.
5. I am not, and never have been Chairman (nor Chairwoman) of Birmingham Education Committee.
6. I took the decision in my capacity as Chairman of the School of Governors and as a member of the Education Committee.
7. When I attended the function at the School I did *not* specially ask to meet Miss Parsons. I was asked if I would like to meet her because she wished to thank me.
8. The next part of the article is such a travesty of what I had presumed was a private conversation, that I am quite disgusted.
9. I never have used that ghastly word 'telly' which I understand refers to the Television.

I very much doubt if you will have the courtesy to print these corrected details, but hope that you will be aware that there is a need for improvement in your Editorial Department.

58 Kineton Green Road, Olton, Solihull, West Midlands

A reproof from Peking

From Alison M. Hardie

I am unfortunately quite unable to make any judgment on the first part of your exposé of alleged corruption and malpractice at GCHQ in Hong Kong, since your issue of 16 May mysteriously failed to make it to its destination in my mailbox here last week. Evidently one of those local officials whose duty it is to check our mail — their existence, of course, is strenuously denied — decided that the article was of more interest to them than it could possibly be to me.

However, I am puzzled by a phrase in the second part. (For some inscrutable reason, the 23 May issue *did* get through.) There the Kuomintang (KMT, Guomindang) is described as 'a nationalist Chinese subversive and intelligence organisation' and in a later paragraph I read of 'the Taiwan based Kuomintang, one of the numerous hostile intelligence agencies operating within Hong Kong'.

Kuomintang actually means 'Nationalist Party' and is the name of the party once led by Chiang Kai-shek, expelled from the mainland of China in 1949 and at present constituting the government of Taiwan (the so-called Republic of China). The KMT *per se* is not an intelligence agency: no doubt it controls one or more intelligence organisations and no doubt they operate within Hong Kong, but that does not excuse such a muddled definition. Would the fact that the Tories happen to be in power in Britain at the moment justify describing the Conservative Party as 'a British based subversive and intelligence organisation'? Come to think of it, perhaps that is a foolish question to ask the *New Statesman!*

Box 44, Peking Languages Institute, Xueyuan Lu, Peking

Ignorance is no excuse

From Anne Hegerty

In the NS of 16 May John Coleman, reviewing *The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle*, merrily confesses his inability to distinguish Johnny Rotten from Sid Vicious. Next time you review a film about the blues, will you take care to ensure that your critic cannot distinguish Bessie Smith from Billie Holliday? Thank you so much.

B 206 Cowan House, Pollock Halls, Edinburgh

A clue

From Brian Pearce

In his review (NS 16 May) of the English translation of Roland Mousnier's book on the institutions of France under the absolute monarchy, C. S. L. Davies writes: 'The second volume has not appeared, and there seems no clue about what it would contain.' Actually, Professor Mousnier's second volume was published as long ago as last January. It was subtitled *Les Organes de l'Etat et la Société.*

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Cheese it, sly-boots!

Having informed the public, and probably to excess, that I recently achieved my allotted span of years and am now at risk from the Grim Reaper, I have been much cheered by a kind friend who encouraged me to press cheerfully on by telling me of a really very very ancient male American of his acquaintance who was heard one day wistfully murmuring 'Oh to be eighty again!' Octogenarianism is, therefore, now my target. A further encouragement was provided the other day in this, our Devon geriatric belt, by the realisation at a delightful tea-party given by my dear old Cousin Madge (Earl Grey, cucumber sandwiches, maids of honour and a light sponge) that I was by far the youngest person present. Indeed, so great was the gap between myself and the next person up (88) that I felt I ought, for it was a summery day, to be wearing a floppy felt sun-hat and gray flannel shorts held up by a snake-clasp belt in my prep school colours (a patriotic red, white and blue).

Looking back as, in old age, one constantly does, it being a less agitating and jollier occupation than looking forwards, I find that the mists of time have kindly obliterated, more or less, any depressing and humiliating incidents that took place (being sick in almost anything that moved, the No. 9 bus particularly) and only the happy and memorable and enjoyable moments remain — childhood picnics in Richmond Park and hide-and-seek among the ferns, the fun of bathing in rough Ilfracombe seas, the discovery of the works of Miss Angela Brazil, one's first oyster, the joy of shared laughter (one of Life's major boons), and matinée after matinée after matinée. I have only one real regret (apart from the nagging feeling that one let slip, and on many occasions, a chance of doing a kindness) and that is that in my last year at Cambridge I did not read English rather than peg on, slackly though I did it, with foreign lingos of which I had had a sufficiency, for I had already 'done' French, more or less, and got little comfort from the, to me, arid wastes of German literature. Or, failing English, why had I not done a brisk year of another and different foreign tongue?

Ah yes, but which? It would certainly not have been Dutch. There are said to be languages where a simple thing like saying 'Good morning; nice day' is so complicated and takes such a while that by the time you have got the whole thing out, the person addressed is long since out of earshot. This appears to be one of the very few failings that cannot be laid at the door *(het deur)* of the Dutch. Curt explosions of sound are rather more their line: 'uncles' come out as *ooms* and 'Don't!' seems to be just *Au*!, pronounced I know not how, and so presumably 'Don't, uncle!' is *Au, oom*! I ask you! My chief quarrel with Dutch, however, is that it is deliberately misleading. For example, if invited to *Het koffiedrinken*, who in their senses would imagine that it meant anything but an ordinary mid-morning 'elevenses', as some phrase it, with coffee, soggy Dutch pastries and, possibly, slices of Gouda, and with conversation limited to the advantages, if any, of wearing clogs, and the wind/energy ratio, or whatever, of windmills. But not a bit of it. *Het koffiedrinken* means lunch. Could anything be more purposely muddling?

Then there is the word, if such it can be called, which is spoken in a rising and interrogative tone and means 'isn't it?' and is written *Hè*, as in 'this soused herring tastes simply filthy, *hè*'. Despite the fact that the Dutch race is on the whole pretty solidly built, from the House of Orange down, they go in quite a lot for playful diminutives. One would have settled, more or less, for *boom* meaning tree, but no, there has to be a 'little tree' and it is *boompje*. The dreadful word 'wifey' comes out as *vrouwtje*. Small drawers (and there seems to be no means of knowing whether wooden drawers are intended, or whether we are in the garment world) appear to be *laatje*. When I add that *kip* seems to mean chicken, *fiets* is bicycle and *boterham* is merely 'slice of bread and butter' and with not a trace of ham to it, you can see how terribly on your guard you must be. Any language in which 'frog' comes out as *Kikker* is simply not to be trusted.

Our own splendidly rich tongue, plain sailing though it may be for us natives as we rattle it effortlessly off, seems to provide a trap or two for foreigners and there has recently come my way a conversation manual for those Italians who are planning a daring trip to our shores (and I personally have decided to overlook the fact that the name of the booklet's Torino compiler and publisher is, regrettably, F. Casanova, nor am I even going to wonder for one moment what that F might stand for). The compiler of this fine feast of English conversational possibilities is very strong on, so to speak, a balanced diet of pain and pleasure, of sunshine and shadow. Joys and calamities intermingle, as they do so freely in the warp and woof of life. Thus, 'The sun is very hot' is closely followed by 'We shall soon have snow'. Then, friendly comments such as 'Look, here comes Miss Mary!' and 'May I introduce Mrs Emily?' rapidly give way to 'My watch has stopped' and 'Be Quiet!'

I am not too sure how popular our Italian is going to be as he travels, by rail or road, from place to place. Helpful though British Rail can often be, cries of 'Give me a pillow, please' and 'Waiter, bring me a ham sandwich!' are, even if heard, not going to strike a very chummy or productive note on the 8.41 a.m. to Worthing, ready though the traveller may be to claim his rights ('Pardon me, this is my seat'). Endless luggage mishaps are, quite rightly, envisaged, and amid a plethora of lost umbrellas, waterproofs, brief-cases and bags, there is a short sharp wail of 'My trunk is missing, and my pocketbook has been stolen!' Any garage proprietor who chances to be a NS reader and to own a garage on the London to Brighton road ('How many miles is it to Reigate? Is the way slippery?') had better consider himself warned of the approach of an Italian car with almost everything wrong with it, and he will soon discover just what. 'Wash the car. The engine is not working properly — there is a diminution of power. You must change the bush of the engine, register the tappets and grind the valves. Test the electric wiring and check the level of oil in the differential. A tyre needs repairing. Is your garage heated?' The generally gloomy tone of this section is nowhere more in evidence than in the preparation for road accidents *(Incidenti di strada)*. 'Your car has crushed one of my wings! My car is smashed and it is your fault! Give me your driving licence! I came in from your left and so I had the precedence. This gets my goat!'

It is, as we know from past experience, in the treacherous field of slang that most foreigners fall flat on their faces and one wonders how recently and for how long F. Casanova graced our island. The English owner of the car which crushed an Italian wing will not, as he expostulates, be much cheered by saucy ripostes of 'Cheese it!' and 'Silence, sly-boots!' and 'Come off it, old horse!', not to speak of 'You're a rum'un'. Nor is nowadays the word 'bobbery' in really constant use (to save you hastening to your Chambers, it is given as meaning 'a noisy row' — row to rhyme with bough, I take it). Two of the phrases supplied are new to me: 'To come to the gutter' and 'To cut it fat' seem to make no sense at all, but then I lead a rather sheltered life and seldom get out, and for all I know what is known as *tout Londres* may be constantly cutting it fat. How flattered, I ask myself, would Miss Mary be (we have already met her in the chatty 'Look, here comes Miss Mary'), to hear a sotto voce mutter of 'she's a nice little bit of goods'. Alas, the word 'nose-rag' for handkerchief is very far from pleasing, and does not benefit from finding itself among odd companions ('I say, I'm putting on my glad rags, so lend me a nose-rag and make it snappy'). One can only be thankful that F. Casanova has not included a section ('Come, Miss Mary, let me caress your chest') featuring his namesake's amorous activities.

Roger Woddis

Bloody nurses

'With the reduced working week, the deal is equivalent to 20 per cent.' — the Sun.
'This should add fat supplements to the nurses' pay packets.' — the Guardian.

O wicked, selfish Florence,
Unmoved by human need!
We vomit with abhorrence
And shudder at your greed.
You bear a lighter onus
Than that of Doctor Fell,
And now you claim, as bonus,
A living wage as well.

Your pay-rise will enrich you,
Your work has been cut down;
You're hardly fit, you bitch, you,
To kiss the surgeon's gown.
The grievances you're nursing
Are no excuse to quit;
No saint needs reimbursing
For being in the shit.

Your posture is more ghastly
Than flesh and blood can stand;
The remedy is lastly
And lovingly to hand:
Angels can add benignly
To better pay than Clegg's
By lying down supinely
And opening their legs.

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SUMMER BOOKS

Edward W. Said

Crossing the Barrier

Marxism and the Muslim World by MAXIME RODINSON translated by Michael Pallis *Zed Press* £8.95.

What Is Islam? by W. MONTGOMERY WATT 2nd edition *Longman & Librairie du Liban* £9.00.

Europe and the Middle East by ALBERT HOURANI *Macmillan Press* £15.00.

In the West, discussions of Islam and the Middle East have now entered the domain of public discourse. Yet in America, unlike Europe, there is both a peculiarly immediate sense of hostility and a coarse, on the whole unnuanced, attitude toward Islam. Last April *Time* Magazine adorned its cover with a Gerôme painting of a Muslim call to prayer, complete with bearded *muezzin* and minaret — as florid and emphatic a 19th-century Orientalist period piece as one could find. Under it a caption read, 'Islam: The Militant Revival'. Roused from its parochial slumbers, the magazine then followed this recognition of Islam by giving its 'Man of the Year' award to Ayatollah Khomeini. In addition, the American public has recently been regaled on television and in the newspapers with dozens of short courses about the world of Islam, most of them riddled with factual errors or ludicrous overstatements ('to be a Shi'a is to be anti-American' or 'Muharram is the month when Mohammed issued a challenge to world leaders'), all desperately attempting to connect revolutions, anti-Semitism, hostage taking, stubborn mullahs, and high oil prices *directly* to 'Islam'.

As a class the American academic experts on Islam had already failed their potentially wide constituency, well before the latest crisis; there was little in their work that could have prepared their audience for the Lebanese civil war, the Iranian revolution, or the rise of Palestinian resistance. Their relationship to political power was poorly defined. On the one hand, they longed to advise governments on matters of policy, on how Muslims thought, on how 'we' should behave towards 'them'; on the other hand, they ritually maintained that they were 'scholars' above politics and partisan causes. Whatever raw information could be gleaned from Orientalists served to support, hardly to modify, the general cultural hostility towards Islam, and therefore Islam remained an abstraction unconnected in most human ways to people who actually loved, worked, suffered, or died.

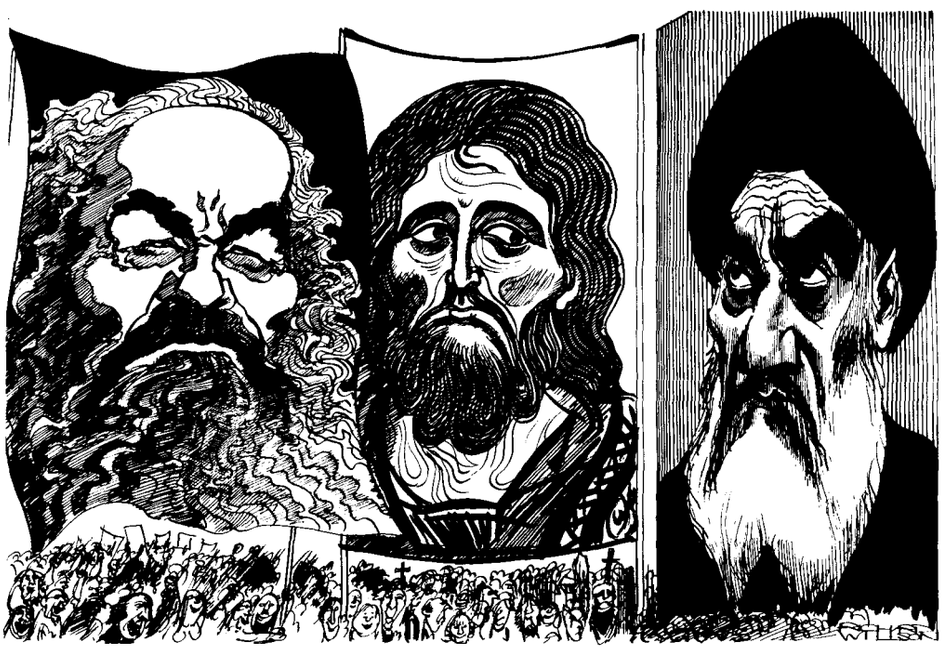
This judgment can be verified when we compare the American situation with the books here under review, all of them by senior European scholars. The interaction between these works and one or more broad currents in the culture from which they derive (Marxism, Christian faith, and liberalism are the ones here) is a serious and estimable thing, whether we look in it for knowledge about Islam or about Europe.

Maxime Rodinson is a French philologist whose Marxism, dry wit, and formidable learning have fuelled a large variety of specialised as well as political works on the Muslim world. He has a tendency to write in clusters of dense abstractions separated by passages of very shrewd and intelligent observation, but he is always a writer worth reading. These 12 translated essays are gleaned from a larger collection of 28, written between the late Fifties and the early Seventies. This is work by a scholar expelled from the French Communist Party in 1958, and it carries the baggage of many internal debates and polemics, most of them dealing with the correct way of understanding various party positions on colonial matters.

Rodinson's Marxist culture, however, is sturdily pre-Althusserian; he also seems unaffected by the unorthodox Marxism of Lukács, Gramsci, or the early Frankfurt theorists. As a result in Rodinson's work there is a discrepancy between his vastly detailed knowledge of the Muslim world and, lagging considerably behind that in vitality, his comparatively unselfconscious methodological attitudes towards the texts he interprets, towards his procedures, towards his own status as an intellectual. (One wonders, for example, whether he would find much to engage him in the idiom of Bryan Turner's coruscatingly brilliant *Marx and the End of Orientalism*.) In these essays his insight — powerful, always perceptive, instructive — is not radically dialectical. In other words, he looks for direct answers to such direct questions as 'What do Marxism and Islam have in common?' and 'How can one understand Islam from a broadly Marxist point of view?'

Within that stable framework he is essential reading. His pairing of Islam with communism as parallel 'movements' risks a great deal, but also argues in salutary terms the case for Islam as a 'permanent revolution'. His extended descriptions of Left movements in the modern Muslim world are first-rate. His accounts of the Egyptian and Syrian Communist Parties, of Mir Sayit Galiev (the Tartar Muslim Bolshevik) and the unhappy outcome of his struggles with Great Russian domination, of the problems of colonialism, religion, and class struggle in authoritarian societies: all these are invaluable. Analytically Rodinson strictly abides by the notion that there is neither an invariant Islam nor an unchanging Marxism, and he is minutely sensitive to the historical circumstances surrounding each strand in his web.

It should be said, with the Iranian Revolution and even Sultan Galiev as part of the case, that Rodinson is in the end not sensitive enough to the possibility that massive and desirable social change in the Muslim world is very likely to escape the grasp of Marxist parties and/or Marxist analysis as they are now known there. One should also add that there is more to the story of Marxism's failures in Egypt and Syria than Rodinson tells in these essays. Perhaps I misread him here, but it does seem to me that Rodinson's reductive confining of religion to the status of ideology (and hence of false consciousness in need of correction by Marxism) closes off the potential richness of *other* progressive currents in the Islamic world beside Marxism; it also fails to account for both the sheer persistence of religious faith and its success in making alliances with very diverse native traditions. One thinks not only of Khomeini's Muslim and Iranian status, but also of Ali Shariati's 'Islamic' teachings, whose influence was so great in preparing the Iranian revolution.



One might try to remedy Rodinson with the new edition of W. Montgomery Watt's *What is Islam?* (Originally published in 1968). An eminent professor emeritus at Edinburgh, Watt is the author of numerous works on classical Islam, the best of them studying the interpenetration of Islamic ideas with specific social realities. His scholarly field properly speaking is the sociology of Islamic ideas and, like Rodinson's at its best, there is no comparable American work (Marshall Hodgson's *The Venture of Islam* excepted). This book, however, is an attempt to render Islam in

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terms the contemporary Christian would find congenial, if not acceptable. Watt offers no single definition of what he calls 'the Islamic vision'; instead he traces it through doctrine, history, the role of law in society, a competitive world and, most interestingly, in the function of religious intellectuals. In a very general way there are affinities between Watt's book and the work of other distinguished scholar/believers like Wilfred Cantwell-Smith and Kenneth Cragg, although the greatest avowedly Christian Orientalist, Louis Massignon, is too Catholic and baroque to belong in the same group.

Yet there are similarities between Rodinson and Watt. Both men tend to equate Islam with orthodoxy, or *sunna,* an equation very central to the work of another great Orientalist, H.A.R. Gibb. But even if it is true as Watt argues that Islam has only very recently lost the integral community of religious scholars making *sunna* possible, isn't it also true that the disrupting effects of *ijtihad* (individual as against orthodox interpretation) have always existed at the very heart of Islam? And what about *ijtihad's* contemporary relevance in countries like Iran and even Saudi Arabia? In a tantalizingly brief essay on the revolutionary tradition in Islam *(Race and Class,* Winter 1980*)* Thomas Hodgkin has suggested a problematic to which Rodinson has alluded, namely, the recurrent dialectic between authority and insurrection in Islamic history. Watt, however, downplays this, preferring to concentrate on Islamic vision as a flexible and finally unbreakable consensus of faith. An implicit assumption is that Christianity and Islam can indeed be studied from each other's perspectives, a procedure which has the suspicious virtue of eliminating the fierce historical conflict between the two. We are left searching for a more articulated *middle* ground between Islam and the West, a space providing not only for the very real contest between them but also for the investigator to stand in.

Providentially that seems to be the exact terrain of Albert Hourani's collection of essays, *Europe and the Middle East.* For many years a Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford, Hourani is among the most distinguished and refined historians of the modern Arab world, particularly of the Levant, more particularly of the role of ideas and institutions there. Like Rodinson a man of wide culture, he is essentially both a liberal historian and a historian of liberalism (indeed the title of one of his best books is *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age)* — a writer capable of sympathy, insight, and tactful respect for concrete experience, yet suspicious of systems, overly general ideas, and ideological structures. For Hourani the unit of study is ideally a functioning institution, a person's life, a current of ideas, or deeply held beliefs. Theory as such does not play any role in his work; politics for him emerges not primarily in the struggle for power, but in the interaction among men, ideas, and, of course, institutions. But his main concern is for the conjuncture of East and West, Europe and Islam: fateful, productive, infinitely suggestive, often romantic, always interesting and significant. When all this is embodied in a career, for example, Hourani rises wonderfully to the occasion. His studies here of Toynbee, Gibb, Volney, and Blunt are perfect things in their own way.

As a writer Hourani is equipped with just the right ear to produce a gentle, clean prose, never ugly, usually convincing and just a little understated. One senses in Hourani a partially thought-through, partially temperamental belief in the ultimate orderliness of human intellectual or spiritual endeavours, even on so hotly contested a territory as the modern relationship between Europe and the Middle East. He does not seem to see irrationality or violence as contributing very much to history. Thus he finds himself drawn to discourse in Europe about the Middle East (and vice versa) that he sees developing almost meditatively out of the efforts of the private consciousness to come to terms with faith, ideas, or other people. No one better than Hourani can convey the sheer *line* of thought as it struggles toward balance and clarity.

This is why it is so valuable for his publisher to have collected such previously hard to obtain essays as 'Western Attitudes Towards Islam', 'Muslims and Christians', and the classic 'Islam and the Philosophers of History'.They situate their subject in the generously surveyed milieu of culture which, despite the infrequent lapses into misinterpretation that it seems to afford, is uniformly presented by Hourani in rationally understandable, irreducibly idealistic terms.

> Even when thinkers knew as much about Islam as [William] Muir and [Henri] Lammens, and still more when they knew as little as [Friedrich] Schlegel and [John Henry] Newman, they tended to put it somewhere near the bottom of the scale of human faiths. The human mind, like the conscience, cannot easily be aroused by all problems at all times, and the problems which faced Western Christian thought throughout the 19th century were not those of the Middle Ages.

For all its grasp of ideas this kind of explanation nevertheless doesn't really work — which brings me to what impairs Hourani's vision of history. While it is true that he is mainly concerned with individual writers, there is something artificially neutral about the actual *location* of their work, that is, where Hourani conceives of these writers as actually *taking place.* Were Newman and Muir, for instance, mere disembodied egos surveying Islam, or did they perforce belong to a bigger enterprise, call it British culture, British society, or the British Empire, itself exerting no less influence on their meditations than the Islam they put at the bottom of their list? Or take Hourani's assessment of the present state of Islamic historiography: is there nothing more to be said about the *quality* of its present state than that its level of craftsmanship is very low? Do governmental concerns and corporations, for example, play no role in the production of knowledge about Islam, or at least no role worth Hourani's attention?

He does not ask what — in so highly charged and politicised a world, in which Orientalists and Islamicists routinely advise governments, write propaganda, are hired as experts by the corporations and by the media — the possibility of non-political knowledge may be.

Craftsmanship, in short, is not simply a vocational matter, but an ethical, an economic, and yes, a socio-political matter as well. And it is not surprising that all three of these eminent older scholars have practically nothing to say about this. So at ease are they in their relatively comfortable guild role as specialists on Middle Eastern Islam, that even their conscious preference for Marxism, for Christianity, or for liberalism is left unexamined.

THIS WEEK

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Peter Levi

Impresario of the Waves

Trying to Explain by DONALD DAVIE *Carcanet* £6.95
Ezra Pound and the Pisan Cantos by ANTHONY WOODWARD *Routledge* £7.95
William Carlos Williams edited by Charles Doyle *Routledge* £13.50
Theodore Roethke by JAY PARINI *Massachusetts* $12.50

At the time of the fall of France and the entry of Italy into the war, T.S. Eliot said to a friend that his consolation was that he would now get no more long, mad letters from Ezra Pound. In 1946 Pound might easily have been executed. That might have been more merciful and more dignified than what happened, his incarceration in an asylum, but the loss to poetry, to human expression, would have been terrible. His late poems are wonderful and fascinating, both humanly and musically; in them Pound told the truth about his romantic fascism.

Pound was utterly confused and unbalanced. His self-importance demanded that he should be near the centre of a world élite. He was Canute in reverse, an impresario of the waves. Much of his scholarship was unscholarly, and most of his obsessions were unsound. And he was vulgar. But as a poet he was or became even more than he claimed to be. The best of Donald Davie's essays are subtle, reasonable and serious discussions of the detail of his work; they range widely, they explain, and they give great pleasure. But they take Pound too seriously as a moral being. He was a poet of great genius, and we read him constantly, but to put it mildly, 'he could not make it all cohere'. Donald Davie is not necessarily right to put the blame for Pound's alienation from England on the amateurism and hopelessness of the British literary culture from 1900 to 1920. The distinction that involves between professional and amateur poets is obscure and doubtful.

Donald Davie is torn between British and American standards. That is part of his interest as an essayist, and what a splendidly trenchant and clear writer, what an impressively rational explainer he is. I failed to find one uninteresting paragraph in this book. Its lucidity makes it easy to disagree with, but even the miscalculation of some of its attacks on the wilder fringe of writers is honourable and endearing. Donald Davie's photograph on the jacket is that of some rare, mid-Atlantic seabird, literary and intellectual and in full spate of explanation. But his phobia against socialism, which he allows to weaken even his case against the fascism of Yeats and Pound, is less sympathetic, and his rage against Dylan Thomas is exaggerated. It is a bit hard to blame John Berryman's suicide on Dylan Thomas's life-style.

But all Davie's prejudices are honest, and he stands for rational decency. What he and such a much lesser commentator as Anthony Woodward fail to express was movingly put into words by Robert Lowell in an essay on Carlos Williams in 1947, writing with a profounder balance and a greater depth. 'But if a man is intense and honest enough, the half-truth of any extreme position will in time absorb much of its opposite.' Donald Davie is within the modern movement a neo-classic writer and critic — a successor to Yvor Winters. That is certainly better than romantic gush or the technical jargon and reworking of earlier writers which is often a mask for chauvinism. But it risks leaving out of account something of the genius and the inwardness, the forceful truth of important writers. Donald Davie is a generous intellectual. Most of what he attacks needs attacking, and he picks his way as carefully and easily as a cat. What fills one with gloom is the juggernaut of the American academic-poetic establishment, the writing schools in which nearly every poet teaches, and the 'on-going act of criticism' which feeds back into poetry. Donald Davie has lived and worked effectively with all that. It must also be admitted that the Critical Heritage volume of notices of Carlos Williams makes a good case for it. The abundance and depth of the criticism published in the United States must in fact be a great help to Americans poets over the last 50 years, and the quasi-paternal relationships of rather great poets have produced some fascinating documents. Perhaps that is one reason why American poetry has been so thrilling, compared to ours, in the same years.

Jay Parini has acquired a PhD, written two books of poems and a novel, and now directs a school of writing in an excellent East coast college. The phrase 'on-going act of criticism' is his, and I thought I was going to dislike his book. But this is an exemplary study of an important writer, and it made me think again about the entire system, the foreign world of modern American poetry. Admittedly, his book scores high by its subject, and by its effective use of Roethke's unpublished papers, and also admittedly, it is sometimes flawed a little by youthful over-confidence, or so I felt. But the relationship it reveals between this very great poet and his advisers, both poets and critics, is humbling and extremely interesting. It is pleasant that Auden's influence was crucial, and the reading of Tillich and Kierkegaard. Maybe if Ezra Pound had found the teachers and examples that he looked for in vain in England, his greatness really might have been less fragmented. That is a point that Donald Davie makes.

All the same, what a poet needs to learn, the wind-carried seed that will flower in some craggy wall, is terribly hard to predict. One need only read over the quotations in Roethke's personal notes, or glance at Pound's relations with Laurence Binyon, which Donald Davie expounds, or watch with hindsight the young Lowell in his 1948 essay on Carlos Williams explaining 'the American myth', to understand that poets learn by the pressures of their own need to grow. Ezra Pound grew very tall indeed, in spite of the famous lack of masters. If his head flowered into dandelion seeds, that is just a fact among other facts. The *Pisan Cantos* are still a greater work of genius and a more moving human document than almost anything else written in English in this century. It may be that Pound's mysterious case says more about the art and origins of poetry than any easier example. Once again, this is something that Donald Davie has understood.

There is a lower level of the quarrel between Pound and the British which is one almost of buffoonery. Davie takes it far too seriously. He minds Max Beerbohm at Rapallo thinking Pound an undesirable acquaintance.. Years ago, I knew an old lady who ran a bookshop in Dorset who had lived in Rapallo and knew them both; her recollections of Pound were very funny and very uncomplimentary, and why not? Davie minds Maurice Bowra calling Pound 'a bore, and an American bore'. That did not prevent Bowra from knowing and loving the *Pisan Cantos*. It is also, in its way, perfectly true. And if Pound had called someone 'a bore, and a British bore', would we not think it funny? When he beats up the barbarous British in *How to Read,* he still is funny. Donald Davie's reaction is not laughter, but meticulous fairness. On this level of knock-about humour fairness is somehow inappropriate. The trouble is that each one of Pound's tones can modulate into another, and beyond the absurd growling there lay a future of fascism and madness. This does not mean that *How to Read* (1929) was not funny, at the time. Pound's troubles began, very likely, with trying to make too many things cohere.

Simon Blow

Cocktail Drugs

The Healing Art by A. N. WILSON *Secker* £6.50
Master and Son by ROGER MITTON *Robert Hale* £5.50
No Country for Young Men by JULIA O'FAOLAIN *Allen Lane* £5.95
Leaves of the Banyan Tree by ALBERT WENDT *Allen Lane* £6.50

The setting for A. N. Wilson's new novel is a spired and quadrangled university town like, we assume, Oxford. A town mellow with architecture, learning and tradition; but Wilson's subject matter is less pleasant. Pamela Cowper, an attractive, unmarried lecturer of 39 is told she has advanced cancer. Frankly, only a few months remain. However, if she accepts the doctor's recommendation to take a course of the euphemistically termed 'cocktail drug' she may have her life prolonged by several years and, should a lasting cure turn up in the meantime, indefinitely. She is warned, though, that the drug can have some unpleasant side effects. Pamela declines the treatment and does not die. On the other hand, her ward-mate, Dorothy, who was pronounced clear when she was declared moribund, weakens daily. Is it possible then that the testy Doctor Tulloch, his mind distracted by thoughts of a salmon-fishing holiday, has muddled the X-ray plates?

The suspicion that Doctor Tulloch is guilty of carelessness provides A. N. Wilson with his spring-board for a menacing intake of error. As the novel unfolds, the ratio of human carelessness broadens and multiplies far beyond the consulting room. There is Pamela's academic chum, John Brocklehurst, living with the vision of a defunct marriage that has staled him of loving. Sex Brocklehurst continues to need, but emotion no. Purely for sex he has used Billy, a sugary and androgynous American girl who would have preferred love. But Billy in her turn is to use Pamela, who is to be as deceived by Billy, as Billy was by John. And then there is warm-hearted Mel, a caricature of U.S. campus scholarship, who

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Oxford University Press

The Oxford Book of Contemporary Verse 1945-1980

Chosen by D. J. Enright

This new Oxford Book of Verse offers substantial selections from the work of forty poets who have emerged and confirmed their talents since 1945, ranging chronologically from Stevie Smith, Earle Birney, and Elizabeth Bishop to Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, Derek Mahon, and Douglas Dunn.
£7.50 *Oxford Paperbacks* £3.50

The Movement

English Poetry and Fiction of the 1950s
Blake Morrison

'Well-written and well-researched . . . He carefully sifts out the truth, half-truth, and falsehood in the various hazy notions that have been current about this group of writers . . . . a reviewer of the same generation as the Movement must salute the inwardness with which Morrison has recaptured that receding era.'
W. W. Robson in *The Guardian*. £8.50

The Laird of Abbotsford

A View of Sir Walter Scott
A. N. Wilson

This subtle, witty, and often provocative book looks back through the indifference which has surrounded Scott in this century and the distortions of his Victorian idolators to recapture the freshness of Scott as he appeared to his contemporaries. £8.95

An Autobiography

Volume I 1880–1911
Leonard Woolf

To celebrate the centenary of Leonard Woolf's birth, Oxford are reissuing his five-volume autobiography, published by the Hogarth Press during the 1960s, in two paperback volumes. The first, with a new introduction by Quentin Bell, comprises the volumes *Sowing* and *Growing*. £3.50 *Oxford Paperbacks*

The Shorter Strachey

Edited by Michael Holroyd and Paul Levy

This new anthology of the best of Lytton Strachey's essays is published to celebrate the centenary of his birth. It is a lively and entertaining selection, which shows the quality, the wit, and the variety of Strachey's writings: two have never been published before. £6.95
Oxford Paperbacks £2.95

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David M. Walker

'Mr Walker has produced something more valuable than another legal textbook for laymen, or a mere dictionary of legal terms. His *Oxford Companion* is an accessible, authoritative, and entertaining compendium of legal concepts, personalities, and institutions.'
The Listener. £17.50

The Commander

A Life of Barclay de Tolly
Michael Josselson and Diana Josselson

This is the first full-length study of the remarkable man who became the Russian Minister of War and, in the eyes of some, the real architect of Napoleon's defeat in the campaign of 1812. £12.95

The Abyssinian Difficulty

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does his share of using too. In the background lingers Dorothy, separated from Pamela once outside the hospital doors by her low, unlettered class, and a further cause for our unease.

Doctors may well be offenders in the healing art but so, all too frequently, are we. Whether the fault lie with the ego or elsewhere, invariably we fail the goals of love and caring that we so pride ourselves to reach. Why did the moment have to slip forever between John and Pamela? and what more terrible reminder to care than Dorothy's servile bequest to Pamela of the fairground piece: a china lady in a crinoline? And yet, deeply tragic as the implications of this novel are, A. N. Wilson is a master at playing black comedy that can make us laugh just when we should cry. Thus, as Brocklehurst thoughtlessly sets alight his college, reducing to ashes two dear friends, Wilson transmutes his dreadful honesty to a comic nightmare. Employing farce and shock tactics Wilson has created a holocaust of avoidable errors where few remain standing, and those who do must settle for compromise, which is, perhaps, the final lesson reserved for the diminished ego. A. N. Wilson's triumph is to make his devastating and truthful material so instantly acceptable.

The theme of users and the used returns again in Roger Mitton's novel *Master and Son*. The tone is more elegiac than in A. N. Wilson's book, but it has a comment that is also upsetting. A Swedish sea captain, van Berg, in charge of a Norwegian freighter, summons messman and narrator, Joey Paulsen, to the bridge every morning and hints at an unresolved sadness in his life. His first wife committed suicide and van Berg dotes on their only child, Ralf, a boy of 19 whom he employs on the ship. The boy is shy and uncommunicative and van Berg asks Paulsen to befriend his son, fearing that he is lonely. But the boy has an act of vengeance to perform and he involves Paulsen in a relationship so that he can uncompromisingly fulfil his plan. The plan goes nastily awry, achieving some fatal damage. Paulsen may by now be aware of his sexual preferences, but his disgust for Ralf is total. At 19, Ralf thinks he has all the answers. The death of his father shows us that he has, in fact, none.

This is Roger Mitton's second novel, and it is written with great economy of language and precision of statement. There are episodes in Paulsen's journey to self-awareness which are reminiscent of Gore Vidal's *The City and the Pillar*, and Mitton can write unsentimentally about an attachment that would be all too easy to mar by glossing. The story has both pace and seriousness, and the sea voyage has an authenticity which indicates some well-absorbed experience. Although the book has a brevity, it is not slight, and it is rewarding to find writing that can trim itself to the proper requirements.

The over-riding weakness of Julia O'Faolain's *No Country for Young Men* is precisely a lack of trimming through attempting too much. The Irish issue may look on the surface ready matter for novelists, and especially so for a daughter of Sean O'Faolain, and born therefore within earshot of her country's troubles. But how to present a coherent picture of so much confusion immediately throws up problems. I do not believe that a novel intentionally disorganised and confused in an effort to reproduce the Irish atmosphere is taking the right path, but this is what Julia O'Faolain has tried to bring off. Through the demented mumblings of erstwhile nun, Judith Clancy, and the Republican sympathies of her descendants there is certainly plenty of sorrow, strife and argument, but the focus continually shifts and so does our attention. It is the distraction of hearing too many conversations at once, as in a crowded pub. Except that in this instance the chatter has been running for 60 years, which is a long time to stand by any bar.

Panoramic novels require more than pages filled to justify a solidity, and Albert Wendt's *Leaves of the Banyan Tree* is a rather slow-moving saga of a village community in Samoa seduced from the simple life by the least respectable of Western values. Tauilopepe, head of the family tribe that dominates the village, wants a share in the chromium-plated luxury he has seen the Europeans enjoying in the island's capital, but it is not a lifestyle suited to his ethnic and myth-bound community. Ancient customs soon war with modern greed, and the village collapses. Albert Wendt's prose deserves better than his narrative and I would have preferred a story that told one more about the gods of the conch shells and less about the predictable god of Mammon.

Julian Mitchell

O Young Men

Friends Apart by PHILIP TOYNBEE *Sidgwick & Jackson* £5.95

The further we get from the Thirties, the more fascinating they become. Everything seems so wonderfully simple compared to now, the issues straightforward, the choices plain. When Anthony Blunt tells us he became a traitor because it was the obvious moral thing to do, we almost believe him. There was Hitler, there was Mosley, there were the dole-queues and the hunger marches — how could anyone hesitate? The poems of MacSpaunday set the excited, threatening tone:

> O young men o young comrades
> it is too late now to stay in those houses
> your fathers built where they built you to build to breed
> money on money it is too late. . . . .

There's one puzzling element, though. The young comrades addressed seem to be members of the property-owning bourgeoisie. Where was the proletariat? Because the literature was almost all middle-class (in spite of B.L. Coombes working overtime), literary historians have created the illusion that the pre-war British Left consisted almost entirely of drop-outs from the public schools and Oxbridge. It's as well to remember it didn't. And that the British contingent to the International Brigade was made up largely of working-class volunteers. They just didn't write themselves up so much.

That said, it's no use denying that a great many middle-class intellectuals were deeply involved in left-wing politics, at least for a time. Philip Toynbee was involved longer than most. *Friends Apart*, first published in 1954, is a classic account, in the form of a memoir of two friends, of the moral, political and amatory confusions of a young middle-class Communist in the Thirties. It reminds us how very unstraightforward things actually were, how unsimple the issues. It mustn't be allowed to go out of print again.

Toynbee is the son of the historian Arnold, the grandson of Gilbert Murray, the great-grandson of an earl; precisely the breeding we have been led to expect of the editor of a small Labour newspaper in Birmingham in the late 1930s. (The paper, incidentally, was bought by the then Frank Pakenham, now Lord Longford, and a director of the firm reissuing *Friends Apart*. Such loyalty from publisher to writer over the years deserves a cheer.) Toynbee's two friends never met. They were Esmond Romilly and Jasper Ridley, and both died in the war. For Toynbee they were like the north and south poles of his storm-tossed youth. He met Romilly when he ran away from Rugby to join Romilly's celebrated anti-public-school crusade in Soho. At once he was swept off to Olympia to be beaten up by Mosley's blackshirts. Romilly, Churchill's nephew, was an overwhelming presence, all pugnacity and publicity, engaged in furious assaults on his own class. Though never a Communist, he joined the International Brigade and wrote a vivid account of the confusion and blundering of war in *Boadilla*. He had the distinction of having a destroyer sent after him when he ran away with Jessica Mitford.

Ridley, whom Toynbee met at a country-house party in Wiltshire, belonged to a very high-flown Oxford set, which included Stuart Hampshire and Isaiah Berlin, and was almost more Bloomsbury than Bloomsbury itself. When a member of the set was caught snooping in another's private correspondence, he justified himself on the grounds that he was going to use the information gained for the moral benefit of the injured party. But the excuse was not accepted; privacy was regarded as a supreme value. Indeed Ridley himself couldn't bear to be touched and escaped into private and elaborate flights of fantasy. When forced to talk seriously, he sought ways to say things not less but *more* obscurely — partly, no doubt, under the influence of Wittgenstein, but also as a genuine way of expressing his temperament. Though everyone thought him brilliant, he would only work at what interested him, and little did. As uncompromising in his own way as Romilly, his putative talents were thus wasted, and he seems one of those fiercely snubbing, self-protective intellectuals disappointed with themselves and life.

It is Toynbee's triumph to make us understand his affection for what his comrades disgustedly called this 'bourgeois hypersensitive', as well as for Romilly, who might otherwise seem something of a bully who just happened to have his heart in the right place. But which of us would like to be judged solely as we were when young? By the end of the book we can see what Ridley and Romilly might have become, and regret they had no chance to become it. We may also regret that Toynbee's Thirties were far more varied and interesting than he can show in a memoir. There are tantalising glimpses, for instance, of his family — dinner at Castle Howard; his mother and father solemnly writing to his Oxford college to warn it he'd been arrested for being drunk and disorderly with Romilly; his mother telling him he'd been born out of his class; his

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Irving Wardle, *The Times*
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ANDRE DEUTSCH

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brother's suicide. There is the comedy of trying to lead two lives at once — coming from a weekend in Wiltshire with the girl he loves, he hides his white tie and tails in a suitcase under the bed he shares with a pensioner in Tonypandy. In love, he was always a victim of fantasy. Was he in politics, too? One longs to hear more, for another version of those years, using, say, Castle Howard and Tonypandy as the poles; or the Liberal Girls of the great country houses and the international students he led on a delegation to Spain. For though it is sad, and unfair to the dead, and goes against his express purpose, Toynbee emerges from his memoir of his friends as more of a man of his time than either. More! More!

Paul Foot

She Must Help Herself

Olive Schreiner: a Biography by RUTH FIRST & ANN SCOTT *Deutsch* £9.95

Mary Brown, a friend of Olive Schreiner, is quoted in this biography as follows:

> I asked a Lancashire working woman what she thought of *Story of an African Farm* and a strange expression came over her face as she said: 'I read parts of it over and over'. 'What parts?' I asked, and her reply was: 'About yon poor lass (Lyndall),' and with a far-off look in her eyes added: 'I think there is hundreds of women what feels like that and can't speak it, but *she* could speak what we feel.'

Nothing better explains the appeal of Olive Schreiner, missionary's daughter who wrote *Story of an African Farm* in her twenties when she was a governess in her native South Africa. She had some access to books, but no access at all to the sort of people who wrote or read them. She was surrounded on all sides by uncompromising religious and racial bigotry. As for the relations between the sexes, Lyndall put it well: 'Men work, and women seem.'

Out of this, Olive Schreiner produced a masterpiece which excited people all over the world. *Story of an African Farm* was first published in a very small edition in 1883. By 1900 it had sold 100,000 copies.

The novel is feminist and atheist. But the power of its feminism and atheism comes not so much from its propaganda passages, as from the suspense of the narrative, the exuberant flow of the language, and Olive Schreiner's uncanny sensitivity to the passions and fantasies of children. The same qualities and pattern run through her other great novel, *From Man to Man,* declared unfinished (though my hunch is that it *was* finished, but Olive could never admit this). *From Man to Man* went into at least three editions after Olive's death, then vanished into an obscurity from which I beg some lively publisher (why not Virago?) to rescue it.

Rebcecca, the book's heroine, bludgeoned by domestic duties on behalf of a roaming husband, finds some solace in her study which she paces endlessly, arguing with herself. Can it be, she asks herself, as the Christians would have it, that 'the universe is a thing of shreds and patches and unconnected parts'? She replies:

> For the man intellectually holding this view to be true, the universe could resemble only the heap of toys which a child gathers about it on the floor: doll, bugle, brick, book, having no subtle living connection with each other, being there together only because the will of the child has brought them there.
>
> Solemnly to study each toy because, when you understood its structure, it might throw light on all the others and closely to study their relations to one another — this doll lies at such an angle to that bugle — would be the work of a fool when at any moment a kick of the child might disturb all the relations.

It followed that the universe was 'one, a whole, and it lives in all its parts'. The independence of each human being depended on each one's interdependence on the others. It was therefore preposterous to try, as intellectuals and capitalists did, to secure some small enclave of culture of civilisation at the top of the society, while the rest rotted. 'Where the mass remains,' Rebecca goes on, 'the few are ultimately drawn back.'

The conclusion comes in a triumphant whisper in words borrowed almost directly from Olive Schreiner's favourite poet, Shelley;

> Is it not a paradox covering a mighty truth that not one slave toils under the lash of an Indian plantation but the freedom of every man on earth is limited by it? That not one laugh of lust rings out but each man's sexual life is less fair for it? That the full all-rounded human life is impossible to any individual while one man lives who does not share it?

That is the central philosophy of these two great novels which (with a third — lesser, but not dissimilar — called *Undine*) were written in South Africa before Olive Schreiner was 30. If she had stayed there, perhaps she would have written many more. But she travelled instead to England where she became an intimate and interminable correspondent with Havelock Ellis, a founder member of the Men's and Women's club, with whose chairman Karl Pearson she had a passionate but unconsummated love affair, and a friend of many leading socialists and feminists including Eleanor Marx and Sylvia Pankhurst.

Nothing comes clearer out of Ruth First's and Ann Scott's biography than Olive's restlessness. She never 'settled down', partly because she did not want to, partly for fear of betraying her belief in a woman's right and ability to strike out on her own. She was at once fascinated and afraid of the egalitarian monogamy which she advocated. Even when she did get married — to a South African freethinker farmer called Cronwright — she spent most of her time away from her husband. In Africa, Europe and England she wandered between lodgings, constantly irritating landladies with her ceaseless walking up and down and whispering.

Back in South Africa in the late 1890s she wrote *Trooper Peter Halket* in Mashonaland. This was her reply to Cecil Rhodes's expedition to carry capitalism and racialism into Matabeleland and Mashonaland by terror. It is the story of a British soldier in Rhodes's army who loses his way and is visited at night by Christ. The trooper pours out all his prejudice against blacks, especially black women, and Christ answers him with a number of biblical quotations which infuriated the Christian civilisers of Rhodes' army. Fourteen years later, in 1911, she wrote *Women and Labour,* in which she urged all women to seek financial independence from men.

These influential books were interspersed with a stream of pamphlets, allegories, and dreams whose direct feminist agitation was seldom far beneath the surface:

> And I said: 'Surely he who stands beside her will help her?' and he beside me answered: 'He cannot help her, *she must help herself.* Let her struggle till she is strong. Let her once stagger to her knees. In that day, he will stand close to her, and look into her eyes with sympathy'.

Her political instinct was usually sure, often prophetic. Not surprisingly, in view of Ruth First's command of her subject, the outstanding part of this book deals with Olive's involvement in the Boer war and its aftermath. Olive was unequivocally for the Boers. She so detested the imperialism of the British invaders that she closed her eyes to the racialism of the Boers. Yet as soon as the war was over, she sided with the blacks against both British and Boers predicting the awful tragedy which would overtake the country she loved if ever 'we reduce this vast mass (of blacks) to the condition of a great, seething, ignorant proletariat'.

Ruth First, long a Schreiner lover, has, with

Ann Scott's help, dug deep into unexplored caverns to produce treasures of new information about Olive. The result is a biography indispensable to anyone interested in her. Occasionally, especially in the chapters which deal with Olive's life in England, the authors strain too much at their central thesis that peoples' political ideas are inextricably bound up in their personal lives — with the result that men like Ellis, Carpenter and Pearson float in and out of Olive's life like shadows.

And the book tends to stray from its purpose: to introduce Olive Schreiner and to enrich that introduction with an understanding of her life and character. Too often, the authors seem to be glancing over their shoulder at a small group of Schreiner-specialising academics.

Olive Schreiner learnt her writing far away from any academic élite, and wrote, as Ruth First and Ann Scott readily acknowledge, for all humanity. Her writing throbs with what

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Henry Salt called her 'passionate intensity'. She is looking all the time for new ways to light up her readers with her own enthusiasms. She pushed her propaganda into the depths of peoples' imaginations by way of dreams and allegories, metaphors and mysteries. She was often excessive and always making mistakes. But a Lancashire working woman thousands of miles away from her could read her book over and over again and recognise in it what she felt. Read this book and you will learn more about Olive Schreiner than from any other. You will understand her better too. But you won't perhaps thrill to her quite as much as she deserves.

Among this week's contributors:

EDWARD SAID is the author of *Orientalism* and *The Question of Palestine.*

A. S. BYATT's Penguin edition of *The Mill on the Floss* is due out soon.

JULIAN MITCHELL's plays include *Half-Life* and most recently *The Enemy Within.*

NIGEL CROSS was until recently archivist of the Royal Literary Fund.

PAUL FOOT is a columnist for the *Daily Mirror.* His book on Shelley's politics *Red Shelley* (Sidgwick) will be published shortly.

TERRY EAGLETON's most recent works include *Criticism and Ideology* (1976).

KEN WORPOLE edits the 'People's Autobiography of Hackney,' a local history project.

PETER LEVI's latest work was a novel called *The Head in the Soup.*

STUART HOOD lectures in communications at Goldsmiths College, London.

Alan Hollinghurst

Eliminating Mistakes

The Proofreader by ALEXIS PARNIS translated by Thomas Hatton & Byron Raizis *Deutsch* £6.50

Black Rain by MASUJI IBUSE translated by John Bester *John Martin* £8.50.

Myself as Witness by JAMES GOLDMAN *Hamish Hamilton* £5.95.

Alexis Parnis is a Greek writer who fled to Soviet Russia during the War and lived there for 13 years, as a successful playwright and poet, an intimate of Pasternak at Peredelkino. In 1963 he returned to Greece and now works for part of the year in Hollywood. *The Proofreader* is his first novel to appear in England.

It is set in the Russian town of Stalinoresk in 1938, and deals with its immensely serious issues by way of hapless comedy. This is a comedy whose ironies gather in relentlessness to the point where they break into direct authorial attack, and the mood repeatedly chosen to cover this ambiguity of comedy and seriousness is one of drunkenness. The book is distinguished by a series of grotesque and hilarious drunken set-pieces where the maudlin, the faux-heroic and the farcical are combined; and like recovery from the delusiveness of drink, the final chapters explode the ironic method itself, and confront inescapable torture and death.

The protagonist Seitanidof (also a Greek) is a proofreader whose task imitates the symbolic role of Stalin, the Great Proofreader himself, eliminating 'mistakes' with tyrannical regulations. An imagined political mistake of his own exposes him to the danger of persecution, and in an attempt to escape this he tries to get himself convicted of a minor civil crime which will enable him to disappear to Siberia for a few years until the heat is off. His abortive escapades and debaucheries are told in a sketchy, casual way, as if registering a conscious marking-time before the inevitable catastrophe.

Through his connexion with printing and literature, and his subsequent involvement, as a model, in sculpture, Seitanidof's case highlights the symbolic crisis of the arts under Stalinism and the perversion which 'Stalinography' inflicted on the creative imagination, inevitable where atrocity seeks a politically acceptable expression. Against the Goliath of the state Seitanidof emerges as an unequipped hero, a David with 'no stone except his soul'.

Parnis's irony is one way of dealing with atrocity; another is that chosen by Masuji Ibuse in *Black Rain,* his novel about Hiroshima: an unrelenting accumulation of factual details. There is no overwriting, no designing impressionism; instead, through the journal of a man who survived the bombing, and through the gathering of documentary evidence, the book simply describes what it was like in the days following the bombing. In Shigematsu's account, ordinary institutions, occupations and objects are revealed with an

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intense pathos against the continuing destructiveness of the fire and radiation; the natural ceremoniousness and formal reticence of Japanese manners charge the mundane with meaning, a continuing sense of the 'affection that the peasants of the past had lavished on each detail of their daily lives'. This essential problem of continuity in the face of a new kind of warfare is dramatised in Shigematsu's attempts to secure the marriage of his niece who has been mortally affected by the radiation.

The detail, anyway arresting to a western eye, is often especially potent and memorable — for instance using the India-paper pages of an English dictionary to make cigarettes: 'In the years before and after the end of the war we smoked a whole pocket dictionary in our house.' As for the details of horror, they are in a sense the kind of thing to which the cinema has virtually accustomed us; but Ibuse has the strength of compelling his reader to recreate the spectacle in the mind from the terrible details he gives, and this is a profounder and more intimate art. The narrator's own absence of expressed reaction crucially qualifies the tone and enables Ibuse to draw on a common fund of inarticulable terror and compassion. The personal, observant eye in the apocalyptic landscape, recording the catalogue of corpses, the bleeding skinless people, horribly mutilated and burned, establishes a link between human beings and the overall potential, both destructive and creative, of humanity in general. This is a re-issue; the novel first appeared here in 1971. Its new publishers believe that 'the topicality of nuclear war' justifies the re-issue — though it is clearly more than justified on artistic grounds alone.

Myself as Witness is not this kind of book artistically, and indeed is set on using an observer to prove that a historical figure — in this case King John — was not atrocious after all. That John was 'one of the most sinister, corrupt and vicious kings in Western history' has been, as James Goldman points out, 'for centuries, both a popular belief and an academic tradition,' and here he redresses the balance with a more psychological portrait and a narrative reliance on known 'facts' which are eloquent in themselves. One of the dangers in such a strategy is that at least part of the sticking-power of the old popular and academic versions is attributable to their narrative and melodramatic coherence and vividness, and this is going to be surrendered to something more vague and lacking in convenient shape; though there is no especial merit in a villainous chiaroscuro, the interests of fiction and historical veracity are not necessarily identical.

Another problem in writing (especially dialogue) about eras before the 19th century is of what language to use, though in as early a period as this, when the characters would not even have spoken English, it is perhaps academic. On the one hand there is threadbare archaism of the 'By the Mass, Roland!' kind, and on the other a relished naturalism full of shit and smells. Goldman (who is the author of *The Lion in Winter* which successfully livened up the traditional gadzooks manner of popular historical cinema) solves both problems elegantly by casting his novel in the form of a personal journal of Giraldus Cambrensis, fictionally hauled out of retirement by John to record affairs of state, and even to transact some of them. He writes in a clear plain style — a witty and *manly* novel.

Stuart Holland

The Real Shadow Cabinet

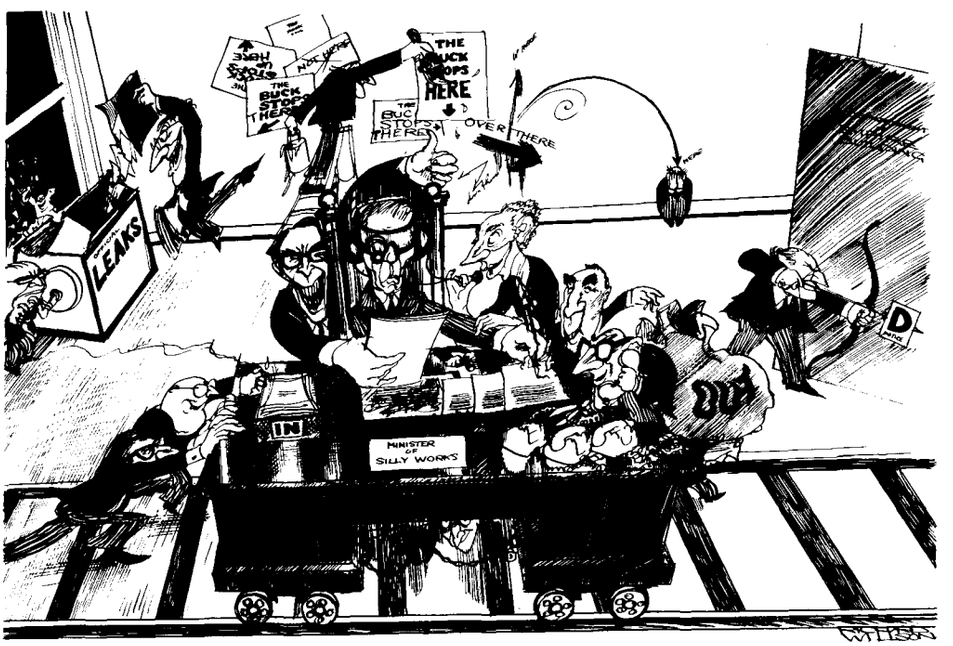
The Civil Servants by PETER KELLNER & LORD CROWTHER-HUNT *Raven/MacDonald* £9.95
The Secret Constitution by BRIAN SEDGEMORE *Hodder* £7.95

When many of us were students, it was part of the conventional wisdom that Machiavelli and Byzantine politics had to be understood in the context of their period; that generalisation from either the Italian's *Prince* or the Greek princes was at best invalid and at worst vulgar, while 19th-century reforms had given Britain the best possible civil service in a modern and different world.

Later some of us learned how wrong this was, finding at first hand how much conspiracy and intrigue against elected governments commanded both the corridors and committee rooms of Whitehall. Peter Kellner, Lord Crowther-Hunt and Brian Sedgemore have between them produced two books which lift the lid on Whitehall and set 'the crooked straight'. Kellner is a journalist whose style and panache enliven *The Civil Servants*. Lord Crowther-Hunt was a member of the Royal Commission on the Constitution (a body whose findings made such an impact that most people remain blissfully unaware of its passing), as well as a key member of the Fulton Committee for civil service reform. Brian Sedgemore was formerly a high flying civil servant, outstanding member of parliament and PPS to Tony Benn.

Both books touch some familiar ground on the mandarins of the administrative civil service: their public school and Oxbridge origins and their merchant bank and business destination after retirement at the sometimes still vigorous age of sixty. Both show the manner in which the 'servants' render truths with half truths and untruth to their 'masters', for instance through the limiting of options going before the Cabinet from official inter-departmental sub-committees; the way in which they conspire against individual ministers or party policies, through meetings of the real 'shadow cabinet' of Permanent Secretaries, plus the vigorous defence of their own power and privilege against parliament and pressure groups, using the prophylactic of the official secrets act, which just happens to leak like a sieve when it suits the generation of their own interests.

Kellner and Crowther-Hunt are to be congratulated on the manner in which they have shown how the civil service too often makes policy rather than implements it. They name names, cite memoranda and meetings and call strongly for change. The depressing message of a main part of their book is the failure of the Fulton reforms. Thus they chronicle how Fulton's recommendations for a powerful new Civil Service Department, intended as a 'battering ram for change', plus greater mobility within the service, and more specialisation were first frustrated and then out-manoeuvred by the 'amateur' administrators whom Fulton criticised.



While Fulton's fate is not the whole of the Kellner and Crowther Hunt saga, it is a key part and one which shows both the strength and weakness of their analysis. The striking feature of Fulton's report was the technocratic and élitist way in which it assessed our own élite technocrats. One of the main thrusts of its attack was on the 'generalist' administrator, versus professional specialists in economics or social policy. Judgments were made on the amateurism of our classics graduates versus the poly-technicians and *énarques* of the Ecole Nationale d'Administration in France. The ENA model stands coyly behind the Fulton proposal for a Civil Service College.

Yet, 15 years on, few realists would argue that Britain's government has failed through too few specialist civil servants. In economics, the number crunching of econometricians claiming to be able to predict national income to a decimal point has given way to an

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awareness that numerate monetarists may pose as great a threat to our social fabric as the amateur Keynesian *literati* of the kind still dominant in the Treasury but a few years ago. In short, the very concept of the specialist rather than general administrator, enshrined in Fulton, is open to serious question. Certainly Fulton would have done better to focus his reforms on the relations between the civil service and the rest of us, rather than to complain that its senior personnel — who certainly blocked his own reforms — were mere amateurs.

This weakness in the Kellner/Crowther-Hunt analysis is precisely Sedgemore's strength. It is not only that his work ranges wider than the civil service alone, but that he has experienced and clarified the reasons why we have been ruled by a corporatist cabal rather than open government. For the reasons certainly do not lie simply in our civil servants, but in the wider control and class structure of British society.

Sedgemore defines corporatism as a system in which government seeks to reconcile the interests of big business and institutions — especially trades unions. In return for such leaders 'keeping their members in line' with government policy, government in turn will give them not only a say in the decision making process but also a veto over the *framework* within which policy is discussed and decisions themselves taken.

He stresses how Lord Armstrong (former Head of the Treasury and Home Civil Service, and now Chairman of the Midland Bank) saw himself as 'setting the framework within which policy decisions are raised', and admitting that he had 'a great deal of influence'. Certainly, such 'framework setting' is what most people imagine governments do, and civil servants accept, rather than vice versa.

But Sedgemore also emphasises how policy decisions fall within not only an institutional framework, but also 'broader strategy, priorities and *implicit values*'. He underlines how Prime Ministers have held views which encompass but a small part of the political spectrum, which they then reinforce through powers of appointment and patronage. Thus in contrast with the principle of democracy, by which there are, or should be, *competing* frameworks for ideas and values, corporatism literally incorporates both power interests and ideas in a central oligarchy.

Such a dimension to Sedgemore's analysis gives it greater insight than the *The Civil Servants*, excellent though the latter is. For instance, Kellner and Crowther-Hunt are very good at showing the tactical strength of the mandarins, and their role in limiting not only the framework, but also the rate, scale and direction of policy itself. But Sedgemore's wider-ranging work gives a better grasp of the strategic framework in which such power can work to such devastating effect, including the power of the conventional wisdom and the capitalist press.

His account of the fate of Labour's industrial strategy in the 1970s is a good case in point. It would be a mistake to think that those radical policies fell simply at the fence of civil service power. But Sedgemore rightly shows how civil servants such as Sir Anthony Part and Sir Peter Carey were able to mount a massive obstruction exercise against Labour's manifesto commitments on industry within the civil service itself, virtually constituting an Opposition of the kind which conventionally should be found in Parliament rather than Whitehall. He also shows how effectively senior civil servants were able to leak this opposition to the press, gaining editorials for 'their' ministers in *The Sun* which saluted 'the courage of civil servant Peter Carey, the man who has thrown a spanner in the works for Industry Secretary Wedgie Benn' and claimed that 'we would be happier if we thought that [choices] were being made on the basis of advice from experts like Peter Carey rather than the political whims of the devious Wedgie Benn'.

Certainly, this Tory government, treading heavily where angels fear, has given a good impression of waging outright war on the mandarins and seeking to transform consensus politics of the 'Butskell' kind. Yet we are still only one year into the Thatcher government. Executive grade civil servants have been decimated by the score, and administrators re-shuffled inside departments. Monetarism seems rampant, and Keynes is regularly reviled.

But in fact less has changed than may meet the casual eye. For one thing, 'Butskellism', or consensus on Keynesian demand management plus the Beveridge welfare state, was under attack far earlier than 1979. It was Jim Callaghan, when Prime Minister, who told a Labour Party conference that we could not spend our way out of a slump. It was Denis Healey, before Geoffrey Howe took over the Exchequer, who cut, cut and cut again into the fabric of the welfare state, and put money sup-

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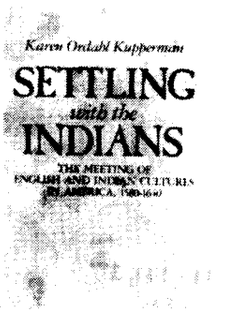

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ply at the forefront of Treasury policy. 'Howeleyism', as a new consensus in the establishment, has been with us for years.

Moreover, the class-biased approach of the establishment, and its key implication that we can survive only through draconian incomes policies, is still very much on the agenda of mainstream politics. Some manic monetarists in editorial boards or Tory backbenches may follow Friedman in claiming that we do not need an incomes policy. But financial and industrial capital, backed and articulated by the mandarins, is calling for one now. 'J' turns, if not 'U' turns are on the agenda.

As such they will do little to solve Britain's underlying economic problems. Cuts and calls for wage restraint will further deepen the current recession while doing little or nothing to re-structure the economy, or help us face the coming crisis of technological unemployment. Britain's economic problem is complex, not simple, and social rather than simply economic. If it is to be resolved it will need to be through radical change in both policies and institutions, of the kind for which Brian Sedgemore, in particular, has called.

At the policy level, Brian Sedgemore has been one of the foremost advocates of what has become known as the 'Alternative Economic Strategy'. His perceptive, powerful and penetrating new book is as strong in prescription as in analysis of our corporatist institutions and their democratic alternatives. Each main chapter includes several specific recommendations for radical reform. With the stiletto rather than the spade, it both complements and transcends Dick Crossman's massive indictment of civil service obstruction. Ranging wider than the civil service alone, it gives an agenda for action which should prove a classic text for those who seek both to defend and extend political democracy.

Queen of the Humanities

TERRY EAGLETON discusses the pressure to reform the Oxford and Cambridge English Faculties

F. R. Leavis's dream of English studies as the vital pulse of society is coming true in ways he would have detested. Over the past decade or so, literary criticism has become a kind of intellectual switchboard, a conceptual baby-farm in which ideas fathered by other disciplines or orphaned notions without a home of their own can be bred and nurtured. One kind of typical English student is now someone who stumbled upon structuralism, took a postgraduate course in film studies and ended up lecturing on Marxism and linguistics in the cultural studies department of a Poly. Throughout its brief history as a University discipline, English has striven to hide its unutterable shame behind a series of shapely figleaves: the poor man's Classics, philology, or the belief that the decline of the West could be reversed by close reading.

Now that its nudity is more apparent, various strategies can be adopted. You can stick to your guns, plough on with Conradian colour imagery and claim that Jacques Lacan suffers from word disorder. More brazenly, like one distinguished Oxford English professor, you can publicly denounce the pointless subjectivism of criticism, carry on teaching it and laugh all the way to the bank. Orthodox critics divide increasingly between a majority who view class struggle and the unconscious as passing fads compared to the durable verities of symbolism and the semicolon, and a few spiritual immigration officers whose role is to frisk European theories entering Britain, admitting those likely to become peaceful subjects while turning away the more subversive sort. Leavis's belief in English as the queen of the humanities is coming true, then, but in a rather less decorous sense of 'queen'.

Oxford, where you still have to prove able to decipher Elizabethan handwriting if you want to research on Malcolm Lowry, hasn't been notably in the vanguard of the new criticism. Indeed Leavis hasn't hit them yet, let alone Lévi-Strauss or Lacan. The Oxford English course looks liberal enough, with 'period' papers all the way from 1100 to 1960, and in theory you could work some Freud and feminism into this blandly innocuous survey, but it isn't the canniest way of ensuring a First, and you would be ill-advised to mention your intentions at interview. The Oxford problem, in short, is less the structure of the course than the structure of the ideology sustaining it, which is entrenched enough to survive most shufflings of dates and options. Like all ideologies, its inability to recognise itself as such poses the most serious problem for its opponents. Most Oxford English dons genuinely do believe they just teach the stuff commonsensically, rather than cooking the books like their theoretically highfalutin critics.

Some of their more wily students, however, find it hard to accept the discourse of the Senior Common Room as the voice of universal Reason. A student reform movement has accordingly sprung up in the Oxford English

Norman MacCaig
Go Away, Ariel

Heartless, musical Ariel,
does everyone prefer Caliban to you,
as I do?

Supersonic Ariel, go zip round the world
or curl up in a cowslip's bell.
I'd rather be visited by Caliban.

— As I am, I am. I chat with him
helplessly spilling out of an armchair,
scaly on the carpet.

I'm teaching him to smoke. It soothes him
when he blubbers about Miranda and
goes on about his mother.

Phone a bat, Ariel. Leave us
to have a good cry — to stare at each other
with recognition and loathing.

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Faculty, and organised an admirably efficient one-day conference at which, in a carnivalesque inversion, teachers from far-flung Polys were invited to tell Oxford what to do. Topics hitherto largely unbroached in Oxford lecture halls — feminist criticism, semiotics, literary modes of production — were aired before a sizeable audience, while a women's street theatre group briefly occupied the steps of the Faculty building.

A pre-conference debate on the inadequacies of the English course attracted, astonishingly, three or four hundred largely critical students out of a total undergraduate body of some nine hundred — an intriguing comment on the official Faculty line that no serious discontent exists. Of the 90 or so senior members cordially invited to attend both debate and conference, about six bothered to turn up. Wary of creating a one-day blow-off which would lead nowhere, the student leaders presented the Faculty with a set of proposals — including more literary theory, a women's literature paper, more historically based study — which have currently disappeared into the bureauratic apparatus whereby student opinion is courteously consulted and if possible bought off. It's important that this shouldn't happen in the present case.

Meanwhile, quite independently, similar events were shaping up at Cambridge. If the Oxford dissidents confront a depressingly homogeneous ideology, the Cambridge problem is almost the reverse: there the Faculty has effectively set a moratorium on syllabus reform, as the various hotly contending critical positions find it hard to agree. Fundamental changes in the Cambridge course were, however, carried through between 1968 and 1972, so that its present flexibility and room for independent work makes Oxford look even more benighted. While Oxford vegetates, Cambridge is creatively confused; and though the status quo looks powerful, the lack of Cambridge consensus opens cracks in the structure into which student demands can insert themselves.

Part of the Cambridge problem is collegiate fragmentation: there are English dons who regularly return hot-foot from Paris with sample cases of the latest theoretical goods, but it doesn't help much if you're stuck down the road with a supervisor who thinks Chomsky was a Russian dramatist. An 'Alternative Faculty' has consequently emerged at Cambridge, less sure than Oxford of exactly what it wants, but potentially in line with the best traditions of Cambridge dissent. It too organised a recent one-day conference, with sessions on Marxist criticism, creative writing, problems of teaching literature to housebound women and a forum on Leavis's work silently attended by Q. D. Leavis. The Cambridge emphasis is at present less on altering the syllabus, though that was thought important, than on the need for students to organise their own alternative seminars on subjects repressed by Faculty orthodoxy, examining critical ideologies and creating writers' workshops.

Oxbridge would be ill-advised to be complacent. The real root of these recent stirrings is nothing less than a muted, pervasive crisis in the whole meaning and function of 'literature' and 'criticism' in the West, one not unconnected with wider ideological turmoil. The student reformers may go away, but others are queuing up to enter; and some of us will be sticking around.

A. S. Byatt

Annexing the Planets

Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire by MARTIN GREEN *Routledge* £10.50

Martin Green's new book is both very ambitious and very interesting. Its local ambition is to map a literary tradition which is deliberately placed in opposition to the 'great tradition' of our 'high culture'. Books in this tradition deal directly with aspects of our culture which we profoundly need to know and understand: Empire, mercantile, military, geographic: frontiers, exploration, firearms, invention, racial subjugation. Books sanctioned by the moral seriousness, and aesthetic exigencies of Dr Leavis tend, Martin Green rightly points out, to be domestic, to deal with marriage, courtship, seduction, adultery, nice sexual morals and the relationship between property and people within family groups. Books that deal with adventure tend to be more popular, less 'serious', though more religious, and to be interested in things like guns, manliness, male groups, caste, treasure (as opposed to cash) and race.

Martin Green does not claim that these novels have the aesthetic complexity of those of the great tradition, which he values. Indeed, it could be argued that he underestimates the aesthetic complexity of some of his key texts, partly out of an almost Freudian-ambivalent respect for the Great Tradition, which gave him intellectual freedom and moral seriousness. What he claims is that they can be studied structurally, that recurrent motifs in them can be related *mutatis mutandis,* as Lévi-Strauss and Edmund Leach relate 'mythemes' in the analysis of folk lore, to produce a king of anthropologico-sociologico-literary understanding of ourselves and of our origins.

He also holds the belief that now, when the English have lost the Empire, 'glad to be relieved of their size, and the responsibilities that went with it . . . feeling free, supple, simple, light', we might feel able to sit down with the immigrant people of England and read together, critically and generously, the adventure literature of our forebears. Martin Green is a cultural prophet — this book is the second in a hugely ambitious project called *The Lust for Power,* of which the first volume dealt with the challenge of Gandhi and Tolstoy. Some such book is badly needed, and Green has got its tone and tactics broadly right: he is interested in popular culture and writes for the 'general reader', but he avoids exaggerated respect for the popular *because* it is popular and respects intelligence, intellect, enterprise and complexity. Although he writes sympathetically of Tolstoi's *What is Art?* he is not

Governments and Trade Unions

SIR DENIS BARNES and EILEEN REID

Governments and Trade Unions examines the relationship of governments to trade unions from the mid-1960s onwards and analyses the underlying political questions involved. Both Labour and Conservative governments attempted to re-create the partnership established with the trade unions during the 1935-45 war and continued with the Attlee Government; to assert government authority, to restrain the bargaining power of the unions by statutory incomes policies and to reduce unions' power by legislation. None of these attempts was successful.

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tempted easily to take up its iconoclastic tone.

One of the good things about this volume is its range, both historical and cultural. The major authors treated are Defoe, Scott, Cooper, Tolstoy, Twain, Kipling and Conrad, with generous space for Marryat, Haggard and Henty along the way, and interesting and illuminating excursions into the histories of real adventurers, from the conquistadores, through Stanley and the Russian Przhevalsky, to Daniel Boone, Kit Carson and Cecil Rhodes. He shows how Defoe's practical solitary Crusoe caused the Gulliver of the high culture of his time to be read in his image. He shows, less successfully, because the subject is more complex, how Scott's nostalgia for the romantic chivalric myths of the aristo-military caste infected Cooper's frontiersmen and enraged Twain, as well as recurring in Stevenson and Haggard. Some of this is well-known: but it looks different set beside say, Andrew Lang's comment on *Treasure Island*: 'Except for *Tom Sawyer* and *The Odyssey*, I never liked a romance so much', which as Green says, 'conjures up a whole scheme of literary tradition, which would relate literature closely to imperialism, and relegate the serious domestic novel to the periphery of the system'. And then one sets *that* remark in turn, against Green's quotations from Cecil Rhodes:

> I am a barbarian. I believe with Ruskin that all healthy men love to fight, and all women love to hear of such fighting . . . I love the big and simple . . . Expansion is everything . . . These stars . . . these vast worlds which we can never reach. I would annex the planets if I could.

And that, again, reverberates against Tolstoi, aristocrat, artillery specialist, chronicler of the siege of Sevastopol and those Russian frontiersmen, with servants and savage enemies of the Imperial power, Cossacks, writing guiltily and secretly in his pacifist old age about the pure, savage animal courage and endurance of Hadji Murad.

One could and must carp. The book races, and injustices are done. Irony is a virtue of the literature of high culture and Green seems to miss irony, even in examples he has quoted. He seems to me to misunderstand Scott for this reason — he sees Scott as Twain did — pernicious, romantic — and misses the literary ironies which are also cultural comment in the treatment of the Highlander in *Waverley*. (He ignores the complexity of *Redgauntlet* or *Old Mortality* altogether.) He also 'places' Kim-and-the-Lama as mythic descendants of Huck Finn and Jim, but although he says he is trying to trace the difference in tone between the tales, fails, in my view, adequately to cope with Kipling's Indian characters and world. (The Lama wins a spiritual battle Green ignores — the battle for Kim's love — whatever political battle Empire may have won for his services.) The same bluntness causes Green to praise early Conrad at the expense of the gloomy, ironic Conrad of *Nostromo*, to point out that *Heart of Darkness*, is a celebration, in part, of Empire, which we knew, and to say that Decoud is a devitalised Crusoe, which is true, and that Conrad knew it, which is surely true, and that this 'undermines the reader's responsive mood of ruthless irony,' which is at least questionable.

But Green is doing something unfashionable, and, despite some clumsiness and factual errors, he is doing it tactfully and subtly. He is exploring energy and vitality and human power in a mood, however ambivalent, of real curiosity. Whilst I was reading this book, I also read Tony Tanner's *Adultery in the Novel*, an intumed, convoluted study of the 'domestic novel'; Tanner has taken from structuralism the image of language-as-a-prison, and wrought the bars into manic puns. Green has, apparently more crudely, taken from it the concept of literature-as-a-system and opened up a way for us to think freshly about what is and isn't literature and language, about how both relate to life and history. Tanner's preoccupations are tempting for literati in the days of failing prophetic — or socially prescriptive — energy. But Green's are — to use a Leavisian word — possibly healthier and, to use a neutral word, finally more interesting.

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Nigel Cross

Not the News

The Geopolitics of Information by ANTHONY SMITH *Faber* £6.95

More Bad News by the GLASGOW UNIVERSITY MEDIA GROUP *Routledge* £17.50

It has been suggested that the United States should impose a communications blockade on Iran: no satellite linkage, no external telecommunications, no computer servicing. This imperial ability to control information supplies is one of the central themes discussed by Anthony Smith in his new book *The Geopolitics of Information*, sub-titled 'How Western Culture Dominates the World'. It is quite simple really: US corporations monopolise information technology; IBM controls 70 per cent of the world's computer market. 'The power of IBM,' according to Smith, 'helps to explain the extraordinary predominance of the USA in the information field.'

He argues that although Western political power may be receding, the West's cultural domination of the world is kept alive by the massive technological advantages accrued over two centuries. While some developing societies are still struggling to keep colonial printing presses operational, the West is rapidly computerising its press services. American satellites have the ability to spy out the natural resources of Third World countries without necessarily sharing the information, except with interested US corporations.

It is this technological imbalance between North and South that Anthony Smith sees as posing the greatest threat to the aspirations of developing countries:

> . . . the gaps which computer technology is creating between rich and poor societies are so great that a failure to catch up with them or lay the foundations for a Third World computing capacity could result in irretrievable backwardness in the early part of the next century . . . What is certain is that only with a thorough-going provision of communication devices will a society be able to achieve the economic take-off so long predicted by development economists and so painfully deferred.

The arguments for what Smith calls a New International Electronics Order are so complex and technical that they tend to be ignored by journalists who are naturally more concerned with that other aspect of the information debate — their own professional freedom.

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'Debate' is perhaps too mild a description of the contest between Western editors and journalists (spearheaded by the USA), and the Third World delegates to UNESCO (encouraged by the USSR). The West argues that a journalist must have the right to gather and report information on, and in, any country without hindrance; the Third World argues that this too often leads to sensational and chauvinistic treatment of Third World issues and can undermine the fragile economies and governments of developing nations by creating international lack of confidence.

Smith's sympathy for the Third World view is apparent, but he recognises that all too often an attack on the methods of Western journalism is simply an excuse for dictatorships to silence opposition and churn out propaganda. Although freedom from state control is desirable, Smith points out that most Third World countries lack the indigenous capitalists to invest in the private ownership of newspapers. It seems more likely that some form of collective ownership will evolve, 'but in any case there is no chance that the Third World will generate a large volume of independently sold and internationally acceptable information about itself until more developing countries establish the principle of a free press.'

Press censorship in developing and communist countries has been used by some powerful Western lobbyists to deny the validity of Third World grievances. *The Economist* for example, attacks the idea of the press functioning as an 'instrument of the state', and insists that the press everywhere must be allowed 'to report what it sees'. A fair privilege, as long as Western journalists realise that the way they 'see' is rarely objective or 'balanced'. In fact their deep-rooted social and cultural values often lead to ideological and racial bias. For instance Western reporting of events in Iran was, with a few exceptions (notably *The Guardian),* highly prejudiced. Indeed *The Economist* has been the subject of special strictures for its coverage of the Iranian revolution. British and American journalists not only displayed a xenophobic condescension towards Islam, but also 'took to analysing the collapse of the Shah in terms of contracts lost to British and American companies, so ignoring the problems suffered by the inhabitants of Iran'.

To combat these assumptions of cultural superiority which pervade foreign reporting, Third World countries have started to pool their resources in order to finance newspapers and magazines within the media capitals of the West. However, imagine the uproar if *The Observer* was owned by a Saudi Arabian or Nigerian instead of a US oil magnate.

The controversy about the role of the media will continue at the UNESCO conference this September. Meanwhile, those unwilling to tackle Sean McBride's epically dull, UNESCO sponsored 'Study of Communications Problems', would do well to read Anthony Smith's timely and lucid guide.

The so called 'objectivity' of the press is under fire on the domestic as well as the foreign pages. The Glasgow University Media Group in their second book *More Bad News* have conducted a detailed study of the television coverage of the industrial troubles of 1975. They prove beyond doubt that both ITN and BBC News have, in the past, presented industrial disputes from the point of view of the employers, and with a deliberate lack of respect for the arguments of all but the most 'moderate' of trade unionists. This bias is blamed on television's sycophancy towards 'experts'. The Glasgow University team appear naively surprised that news editors chose to accept the economic facts and theories of Mr Healey (as Chancellor), the Treasury and the Bank of England, while failing even to consider the views of Frances Cairncross of *The Guardian,* the Tribune group and the Cambridge Economic Unit.

In fact a very important observation is very nearly buried by the repetitious detail and ponderous analysis of *More Bad News:* that the media generally accepts the legitimacy of the judgments of the ruling class and, by implication, the accuracy of Whitehall press releases. The very uniformity of approach to foreign reporting is an indication of the success of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in ordering our responses to world events. Iran, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, France — the FCO has a view which is consistently reproduced by Fleet Street, the BBC and ITN. In that sense the UK has, literally, a state controlled press.

Anthony Smith, Glasgow University and other critics of the media, are slowly but surely providing the necessary evidence for a thorough critique of the alleged profes-

Ken Worpole

A Day at the Inquest

Here is where they unpuzzle death.
Men in black suits, some as dumb
As undertaker's mutes, open and close
doors,
Cough, move from bench to bench with
messages,
Ferry people from cars, bring fresh flowers,
As if this were a magician's palace, or a
mason's court.
Mozart could set it to music; better Berg.

There is as much justice here
As children feel exists in schools.
It is open day, the coroner defers to visitors,
The jury, casts 'I'll see you after' looks
At those who mention conspiracies or
politics.
Paint peels from the faded primrose walls,
Dull brass rails and velvet curtains
Send messages of dust to water jugs. An
amplifier hums.

Interest ebbs and flows, a juror
Stares out of the window, open, listening
To a helicopter droning overhead,
Thrashing the sky in panic; inside it is all
A matter of details, of matching bits of
skull,
Of forensic tests on weapons, who was
wearing what?
The body politic, Blair Peach, is weighted
down again
Beneath a million words of transcript,
Tapes of garbled police messages, legal
legerdemain.

The obvious screams out for recognition
In this one of many mansions of the state;
Let what is known already be the
conclusion,
Let reason walk freely, at the end,
From the Coroner's large black gate.

SERPENT AND LILY

A novella, with a manifesto. The Sickness of the Age

by Nikos Kazantzakis

Translated and with an Introduction by Theodora Vasils

"A young artist's first fruits . . . oozing with creative blood and the delirious fever of a creator's dream . . . a poem youthful and sick, beautiful and morbid, moral and immoral." Such was the welcome that Nikos Kazantzakis received from his senior contemporary, poet Kostis Palamas, on the publication of *Serpent and Lily,* translated here for the first time. The novella, Kazantzakis' first published work, tells of an artist whose infatuation with his model becomes passion and then a torment from which only murder can release him.

An allegory? Translator-editor Theodora Vasils offers by way of answer Kazantzakis' early, untranslated essay "The Sickness of the Age." In that artistic manifesto, Kazantzakis sees modern man liberated from a repressive religious past into what at first seems a fresh, pagan, animal innocence. And yet there is a flaw in the liberation. Something still enslaves, still tortures.

Many readers know the resolution of this tension which Kazantzakis achieved in his late novels.

Serpent and Lily and "The Sickness of the Age" shows us the young Kazantzakis in his first stormy encounter with the question of his life.

128 pages £5.50

THE RHIZOME AND THE FLOWER

The Perennial Philosophy — Yeats and Jung

by James Olney

The Rhizome and the Flower is a study of the many striking similarities of thought, image, and expression in the work of W. B. Yeats and C. G. Jung. The historical "rhizome," of the perennial root system, shared by Yeats and Jung is essentially the Platonic tradition; but Platonism has its roots too, and the book undertakes a study of those roots — in Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles — which are also, according to the argument, the dominants of the psyche of humanity.

Professor Olney gives a clearer sense to such central Jungian terms as "archetype," "individuation," and "the collective unconscious," and demonstrates their close similarity to philosophical concepts in Plato and poetic doctrines in Yeats. He also shows that these concepts may with great profit be brought to bear in our studies of philosophy, poetry, and psychology.

370 pages £12.00

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sionalism of Western journalism, which is in much the same position as was Christian theology in the 1859s: clinging to increasingly obsolete beliefs.

Paul Binding

The New Anthropos

Imagining America by PETER CONRAD *Routledge* £7.50

Amerika, du hast es besser
Als unser Kontinent, das alte . . .

exclaimed Goethe in 1827, voicing the hopes surely every European writer, until the present time, has entertained of the United States. America was at once the New World, exciting in its amplitude and freshness, and the Old translated, purged of its corrupting, restrictive structures and rituals. Native American writers of the 19th century, most notably Whitman, corroborated this vision; Whitman apostrophised Americans as a new breed of man, its males, 'cameradoes' all, animated by a creative anti-bourgeois *brüderschaft* which Europe couldn't have accommodated, its women independent, free-moving beings. Thus America presented the European with the possibilities latent in both his own society and his own psyche.

The Victorian travellers with whom Peter Conrad's fascinating study of British literary response to the United States opens were largely disconcerted by the society they found there, and therefore censorious of it; Frances Trollope, Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope all disliked its confusion of the public and the private, its overt enthusiasm for money, its roughness and the constant recourse of its citizens to self-justifying, pseudo-religious rhetoric (see *Martin Chuzzlewit*). The first significant British writers to live for any extended period in the States were Stevenson and Kipling; both responded more warmly to the country than their predecessors had done, stimulated by what Conrad aptly calls its Epic/Chivalric qualities. Yet Stevenson's attitude to America is really best described by the title of one of his travel-books, *The Amateur Emigrant*, while Kipling, living in a New England fastness, never viewed the American nation as an entity that could include him. The desire to find a home in America, to accept the challenge of becoming American is, as far as writers are concerned, a post-first world war phenomenon, America having become the land of the future, not in the sense of its being a society in the making, but of its containing the extreme expressions of cultural and social tendencies within all Western civilisation. For Conrad the last important literary tourist in the States was D.H. Lawrence in quest of the primitive, rejecting New York and embracing, if only transitorily, New Mexico. His last chapters concern—in depth—expatriates: Auden, Huxley, Isherwood:

> writers who go there as immigrants, not dilletantish tourists secure in the possession of a return ticket . . . Until now, America has been a remote, impractical alternative with which the imagination trifles but which it always renounces. From now on, the choice of America is tantamount to the choice of life.

The last work of literature to be analysed by Conrad is Isherwood's masterpiece *A Single Man* which contains the following significant passage:

> The truth is, our way of life is too austere for them. We've reduced the things of the material plane to mere symbolic conveniences. And why? Because that's the first essential step. Until the material plane has been defined and relegated to its proper place, the mind can't ever be truly free. One would think that was obvious. The stupidest American seems to understand it intuitively. But the Europeans call us inhuman — or as they prefer to say immature, which sounds ruder — because we've renounced their world of individual differences, and romantic inefficiency, and objects-for-the-sake-of-objects. All that dead old cult of cathedrals and first editions and Paris models and vintage wines.

Isherwood thus praises America's most castigated features — its material over-abundance, its lack of social cohesion, its absence of inherited and transmitted high culture, because he feels these all are conducive to a *new* kind of spirituality. Amply catered for, the body can submit to the spirit; while Family, Class and Tradition do not make the stifling demands of an American that they do of others. Peter Conrad's book can be seen as a tracing of an intellectual progression to this point of vision, projected on the rest of the world from America's opulent, privileged extremity, California.

It is with the challenges that 20th-century America presents to the culturally dissatisfied refugee from Europe that Peter Conrad is most fully engaged. Consequently while never less than absorbing, the earlier chapters of his book lack the intellectural depth and focus that so characterises its latter part. Too often Conrad over-interprets remarks by his literary itinerants in the light of his and our knowledge of them. What Conrad has to say about Rupert Brooke — whose accounts of New York in 1913 would seem percipient if they appeared today — are of very great interest, but would Brooke's use, when describing Niagara, of imagery of capitulation to the romance of war really have the significance Conrad accords it did we not know about the poet's war experiences and death?

But Conrad's chapters on Auden, Huxley and Isherwood, all of whom sought in the States release from the cultural limitations, decay and fossilisations of Europe are superb. With great brilliance, while not eschewing attention to detail, Conrad combines analysis of the writers' literary accounts of America, with analysis of their behaviour during their American years and of the 'mores' and cultural and geographical particularities of the parts of America in which they settled.

For Auden America was New York — as Conrad puts it, 'a vertical city for a hieratic moralist'. Its anonymity, its racial hotch-potch liberated him, who had felt so often the eccentric outsider, and epitomised for him the human condition in a way that no European city could have done. Its strenuous pursuit of commercial victory could be easily absorbed into the existential Protestantism to which he converted himself during his New York years, since it confirms and stresses the significance of the individual will. (And it was Auden's opinion that America had 'spiritualised wealth'.) Conrad dissects Auden's religion with its America-inspired preoccupation with the Fall and the partial redemption of man in this world, with masterly skill, and in doing so illuminates the poet's total 'oeuvre'. Auden as *New Year Letter* testifies disliked California, refusing indeed to go sight-seeing while staying there, because he found it lacking in the virtues and informing spirit of Protestant 'economic man', 'the new *Anthropos*', who 'subjected earth to the control/And moral choices of the soul.'

But his very coinage of the phrase 'new *Anthropos*' links Auden to his two fellow literary exiles who had chosen California rather than New York, Aldous Huxley and Christopher Isherwood, since they too are obsessed by the idea of the American as a different, newer species of the human race, as a being who has discovered truths withheld from those enmeshed in the ritual-ridden societies of Europe. Huxley and Isherwood were both fascinated by the Californian's special relation to Time. The New Yorker frenetically energetic, defeats Time by preoccupation with tomorrow; the West Coast American does so by absorption in a present that obliterates yesterday and tomorrow. Hence his obsession with mysticism and states of suspended being, attained through yoga or through mescalin and LSD; hence too his obsession with his body and with its surrender to the surf and the sun. The Californian 'new anthropos' of Huxley and Isherwood is concerned, however, with defeating not only Time but Death, defied in its cemeteries, and wooed and anticipated in meditation and 'trips'. On the subject of the relationship of these writers to this very important aspect of American/Californian culture Conrad is not merely illuminating, he has surely broken new ground:

> America's traditional offer of rebirth to the immigrants has been revised. Now it promises him death. The choice of America is not the choice of life but the choice of self-extinction.

To have a fresh attitude to which is perhaps another form of spiritual and cultural rebirth. Peter Conrad's book is the artefact analogue to his subject — a voyage of discovery, the more invigorating for the realisation that there cannot be the discovery initially hoped for.

Jamie McKendrick

Cargo

Two paunchy barrels
with distended staves
brewed the rainflow
from the greenhouse roof.
Cutlasses of thorn
stood guard at one.

Motionless I'd peer
into the other
at the quicksilver
tails vanishing
azure of beetles
and my eyes floating

half-closed Chinese
on the green dome
of the waterdark
like two canoes
conveying jewels
to their own kingdom.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Mark Kidel

Instant Revivals — the LA Disease

The New Wave has always felt, like most contemporary styles and fashions, a little contrived, the product of a culture obsessed with the passage of time and the need to encapsulate each moment in a new catch-phrase or slogan. By the time it reached Los Angeles, the world headquarters of the rockbiz, it had been transformed into pure artifice, the latest craze from England, home of the Beatles — the original and fastest success in the memory-bank of Top Ten hits and instant fortunes.

The web of influences, stretching both ways across the Atlantic, has become so complicated that today's 'new wave' musicians of the West Coast are imitating a British sound which itself owes a great deal to the decadent American rock of the Velvet Underground and the Stooges. Purple Hearts (on 'Beat That' Fiction Records Super Fix 002-2383568) one of the best English mod revival bands (so exact in their look-alike, sound-alike style that they manage to make their naive explosiveness seem fresh and real) have recorded a remake of Wilson Pickett's classic soul hit 'If You Need Me', but it is as much a revival of the English (white) versions of the song that sprang up in the mid-Sixties (eg Mick Jagger's) as it is a direct cover of the black original. It is a little scary just how fast the simple speed of amphetamine has returned to the charts: revivals are getting so close to instant that time is just fizzling away.

The word 'punk' has travelled twice across the global village, a term of abuse for street-kids, taken on with pride by a rash of US street-orientated bands in the late Sixties, and then adopted by our own angry new men during the summer of '76. It is now carried, very self-consciously, by the latest fashion-followers of LA. What started as a genuine rebellion all over the UK has been adopted as a *style* in the USA, a new bit of packaging like the yearly change of design on the Detroit car production lines.

Linda Ronstadt, always a woman with a keen sense for the shift in styles, and with a producer — Peter Asher — with an equal skill for translating her talents into appealing product, has 'gone punk', or at least, that is what all the publicity in the US would have us believe. The cover of her latest album 'Mad Love' (Asylum K 52210) shows her looking suitably alert and short-haired, and while there is still the usual mix of material, with three songs written by Elvis Costello (probably the most highly-rated so-called new waver in the US) and a dry, clipped guitar sound, she is clearly making a bid for up-to-the-minute acceptability. 'How Do I Make You', a recent US hit and fast moving punkette's tantrum, has all the force of a track by Joe Jackson or Costello, with a bunch of ordinarily sedate LA session musicians (including Bill Payne and Russ Kunkel) apeing to perfection the fashionable frenzy of the times: it is a fine, almost angry song, but as with so much else in Southern California, it is all brilliant surface, with little sign of depth and commitment.

It is the same glittering sheen that has strangled Boz Scaggs ('Middle Man' CBS 86094), once with the Steve Miller Band, and then the leader of his own hard-rocking R & B band. An album for Atlantic and three further ones for CBS established him as one of the best white interpreters of a predominantly black idiom. Scaggs played one night at the Roundhouse in the early Seventies: he was in London at the time recording an album. He gave one of the toughest white blues performances I have ever heard — leading his band with a vigour that had nothing to do with the flashy pyrotechnics so common in those days. Something of the elegance that was soon to take over was apparent in the album cover picture which fashion-photographer Clive Arrowsmith shot of Scaggs on that London visit: a langour which now characterizes most of his musical efforts, a refinement which takes the bite out of a music that was made for dancing. Boz Scaggs has got lost in the formula, not so much the 'middle man' of the album title as the 'middle of the road man' now, a commercial success no doubt, but a sad loss of talent and inspiration to the demands of the machine. One track on the new LP, 'You Got Some Imagination' stands out as a reminder of the force of which he is capable, but most of the remaining tracks would hardly keep a disco crowd awake.

Herbie Hancock, on the other hand, former keyboards player for Miles Davis, has always flirted with chart success, without making too many sacrifices. 'Monster' (CBS 84237) is the latest in a line of jazz-disco-rock fusion albums, predominantly instrumental works, with vocals laid almost as an afterthought. He is the partial prisoner of the LA disease, far removed from the music of his roots. The cure for over-refinement seems to be a sophistication which can never wholly replace the original spirit, and in Hancock's case, a collection of musical instruments at his command which reads like an electronic supermarket shopping-list: Polyphonic Keyboard, Clavitar, Waves MiniMoog, MiniMoog, Prophet 5, Oberheim 8 Voice, Yamaha CS-80, ARP 2600, Hohner Clavinet, Rhodes 88 Suitcase Piano, Steiner EV 1, Sennheiser Vocorder, WLM Organ, Lynn-Moffett Drum Synthesizer, Modified Apple II Plus Microcomputer, Bland CR70, and piano. It is to Hancock's credit that the list looks far worse than it sounds, and the album moves with a grace and pace that are quite surprising considering the potential for packaging any real music out of existence. He keeps all his paraphernalia within the realm of appropriate technology but this record is nevertheless uncomfortably smooth, with the same lack of honesty and spontaneity as so much popular music today.

The LA disease is not a total, non-stop epidemic, for the city *has* produced some fine and very gutsy music (Little Feat at their best, for instance), but it is a tendency towards blandness, by no means exclusive to Southern California. Far away in Glasgow, the lights of Beverly Hills must seem alluring, but they do not cast such a powerful influence. The Glaswegian band Simple Minds play with the sort of commitment that goes with a group's first steps into the rock arena. Their first album 'Real to Real Cacophony' (Arista SPART 1109), out now for several months, wears well as time goes by. Like Magazine, Punishment of Luxury and Wire, they belong to the introspective branch of contemporary rock, pushing into sombre inner landscapes instead of making, more like 999, Sham 69 or the Gang of Four, open and aggressive statements to the world at large. While the latter are street-criers, the former are rock poets, explorers of darkness and anxiety. Simple Minds are the Led Zeppelins of the genre, using a heavy dramatic style to good effect. They work the synthesizer in sparingly, adding to the richness of the various layered sounds. 'Film Theme' one of the album's instrumentals, is a highly imaginative build-up of textures, a piece with a gradual development, a powerful expression of changing emotions that only music, not words can convey.

Something of the same landscape comes across blearily on 'Psychedelic Furs' (CBS 84084), first LP by the band of the same name, but it is hypnotic and muddy rather than dramatic in mood and style. The Furs hark back to the days of acid, early Pink Floyd and the Velvet Underground, but they are not, like the Purple Hearts, recreating a total world of style and sounds. They are more concerned with the myths of that era, and their sombre and mysterious music — the lyrics buried deep within the mix of echo-laden guitars and drums — owes as much to the New Wave and its US East Coast roots, as it does to vintage psychedelia.

There is a tinge of despair in Kevin Ayers's latest album 'That's What You Get Babe' (EMI SHSP 4106) though it is so tinged with worldly elegance that you would hardly notice. Ayers's elegance is more of a zany pose than Boz Scaggs's: he has cultivated it increasingly since the days of his show Bananamour, a long way from his dadaistic musings with the Soft Machine. He is closest perhaps to an English equivalent of the French *chansonniers,* clever, witty, charming and cultured. His voice has the freshness of a polished amateur's, almost a sung whisper at times, sensual and a touch debauched.

Another line of despair altogether — terminal this time — can be found on Robert Fripp's new album 'God Save The Queen Under Heavy Manners' (EG Records EGLP 105), the second in the Frippertronics trilogy to be completed by 1983, a year many clairvoyants, prophets and pessimists claim will bring the world to catastrophe. The album is divided between rock tracks and purely electronic ones, the former much treated Eno-style Fripp singing in near-demented tone, and the latter, ethereal explorations of various natural-feeling electronic sounds. While the two rock band tracks are strong, Fripp's real contribution lies in the pure sound field, where he leads along with Brian Eno and Klaus Schulze in the exploration of slow-moving metamorphosis, the meditative music descended from Terry Riley, Steve Reich and Philip Glass. '1983', a track that echoes very powerfully some of the passages in Fripp's first album in the present series, gives a disturbing sound image of the apocalypse — Conrad's 'heart of darkness' revisited.

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It was the Beach Boys who sang, true to Californian type, of 'fun, fun, fun,. . . 'til my daddy takes the T-Bird away', and that is just what the Feelies (from New Jersey) seem to be doing. Daddy, after all won't take the T-Bird away until 1983. They demonstrate with great zest and originality that the LA disease has not destroyed all creativity on earth yet: 'Crazy Rhythms' (Stiff Records Seez 20) combines delicacy and frenzy. To be both simple and sophisticated, without being contrived, is no easy feat, but the Feelies succeed, where so many others are immobilized by self-consciously adhering to a supposedly winning formula or style. There is no Apple II or Yamaha CS-80 here, only 'bell, coat-rack, can, tom-tom, cowbell, pipe and drum', a small but inventively used arsenal of sounds that help those 'crazy rhythms' sing: fun and innocence worn very self-consciously, but there is little else around in the shadow of 1983.

Hard & Soft

STUART HOOD reports a recent seminar on film pornography

'The mainstream of film, and the conventions within which it has consciously evolved, portray a hermetically sealed world which unwinds magically, indifferent to the presence of the audience, producing in them a sense of separation and playing on their voyeuristic phantasy.' So writes Laura Mulvey, feminist film-maker and director of two interesting films dealing with the representation of women: *Penthesilea* and *Riddles of the Sphinx*. It is a view of the dominant mode of film-making that can be made to embrace indifferently the U feature, the exploitation movie and the porn film, seeing them as part of the same spectrum and almost always — given the nature of our society and of its film industry — marked by the male gaze, which through camera and projector imposes itself on the viewer. It can further be used to attempt a distinction between soft- and hard-core pornography in film not in terms of what is depicted — pubic hair, vaginal imagery, sexual activity — but in terms of the look: how the audience is invited to watch the screen.

The attempt to establish this distinction was one of the themes of a recent seminar on pornography organised jointly by SEFT (the Society for Education in Film and Televsion, an offshoot of the BFI) and the ICA. There are, one speaker suggested, two ways of looking associated respectively with voyeurism and fetichism. The look of the voyeur is catered for by soft porn, which offers a secure diegesis (which is a term covering not just plot but dialogue, sets, costume — whatever, in short, gives verisimilitude to narrative) and a fictional world over which the spectator has power precisely because he is separated from it, watching it from outside. The fetichist, he argued, requires hard porn in which there is a direct address from the screen to the watcher, who cannot tolerate change or development; nothing must happen except obsessional repetition of the act — hence the circularity of the bulk of hard-core movies.

The seminar was given a chance to test these criteria on a variety of films of which one was a hard-core feature with the parodistic title, *Three Phases of Eve*. A cause of some apprehension in prospect on a Sunday morning without the fortifying comfort of anything stronger than coffee, it was in the event received with mixed feelings and was even heard to be described as 'quite enjoyable'. Perhaps this was because the audience was liable to burst into laughter when sexual acrobatics brought volumes from a bedhead collection that included I Ching and Jung's *Man and his Symbols* toppling down; in this respect it was totally different from the mute congregation of solitary males who constitute the normal audience for such material. As far as the theory concerning soft and hard porn was concerned it was justified; there was indeed a weak attempt at some sort of diegesis — a hilarious series of psychoanalytic sessions in the course of which the patient cures her analyst by her sexual ministrations — but that was a mere gesture; the fetichist element was strong, circular, repetitious, a sequence of impossibly prolonged orgasms. In terms of representation, it might be argued, there was something in common between *Three Phases of Eve* and Oshima's chilling *Empire of the Senses* with its insistent sexual explicitness; but just as the regulars slipped away from the relentless images of Pasolini's *Salo* when it was shown in a Soho blue movie house so they were repelled and threatened by Oshima's rigour and implacable moralism.

Three of the films were by women. *Student Nurses*, directed by Stephanie Rothman for a Hollywood studio specialising in exploitation movies for the drive-in circuits, belonged firmly to the genre of soap opera being generally shot with the un-adventurous assurance that is the mark of such mass products. Yet, as was pointed out in discussion, it was soap opera with a difference. There were, for instance, long scenes of what one woman speaker described as 'utopian sex'; and there were strong heroines, one of whom becomes involved with chicano urban guerillas. Moreover the film made explicit in interesting visual ways — such as by inter-cutting flashbacks to 'utopian sex' with an abortion scene — that 'utopian freedom' can have grave social consequences for women. It was a point driven home by a shot in which the young woman who has aborted imagines her bed to be surrounded by censorious onlookers so that she shouts straight into camera (and so at the audience): Stop looking at me!

Student Nurses was less stylish than Nelly Kaplan's *Nea*, a title which is also that of a highly successful erotic novel written by the film's teen-age heroine. Nelly Kaplan has an interesting history beginning with apprenticeship with the gifted French director, Abel Gance; it includes an involvement with surrealism and the acquisition of a considerable reputation as a feminist film-maker — the director, for instance, of *La Fiancée du Pirate*, the heroine of which she has described as a witch who 'instead of being burned burns the other people'. *Nea's* heroine has a familiar in the shape of a cat so that the film may be read as the subversion through sorcery of the representation of the amorous complications of the *haute bourgeoisie* as they are commonly depicted in glossy French features. Thus into the conventions of the genre the director has inserted shots of sexual activity — masturbatory on the part of the heroine, heterosexual on the part of her publisher, and homosexual on the part of her mother — signalled by the heroine putting on glasses and difficult to locate within the diegetic space. Curiously conventional in that the heroine, having been swindled by her publisher and having given him his come-uppance by simulated rape, in the end elopes with him romantically; unconventional in that the heroine — in a long and interestingly distanced shot — persuades her mother to leave her husband and live with her lesbian lover, the film hovers on the edge of a *bouleversement* which somehow never quite comes off. But it undoubtedly is soft porn; which raises some interesting questions about the male look and women directors.

Carolee Schneeman derives from a different tradition — that of the avantgarde cinema. Her *Fuses* is a record of her love-making filmed by herself with a little help from a friend. It uses the techniques of disjunctive editing, of manipulation of the images, common to a certain style of avantgarde film; they have an alienating effect in that it is extremely difficult to find a look with which to identify — unless, as has been seriously suggested it be that of the cat which broods over the primal scene. In these terms, therefore, it falls under the heading of neither soft nor hard porn. It is also somewhat cheerless.

Much of the debate was conducted in terms of concepts derived from Lacan's post-Freudian theories concerning the formation of the ego and the way in which the child finds its place in 'interhuman reality' — a process in which (according to Lacan) a crucial moment is the child's recognition of itself as an object in a mirror. It is tempting to go along with Christian Metz in saying that 'all this' — but not 'undoubtedly' as he would have it — 'is reactivated by the actions of that other mirror, the cinema screen,' on which like Mallarmé's faun we seek the shadow which the objects of our desire have become.

The audience for such discussions were, by all indications, 'reasonable' people who rejected the radical puritanism of feminist groups like Reclaim the Night as they did the right-wing puritanism of the Festival of Light; but they showed little sign of agreeing with the Williams Report on Obscenity and Film Censorship that material ought to be restricted if its general availability would be offensive to people like themselves. There was a surprising unwillingness throughout to confront pornography as a social phenomenon just as there was only a tentative discussion of the social construction of sexuality. The Lacanian approach, being notoriously ahistorical and unwilling to give primacy to economic and social factors, is not particularly useful in a debate on social morality. But what of Marcuse's concept of 'desublimated sex', which was certainly relevant, or his view that 'repressive desublimation ... operates as the by-product of the social controls of technological reality which extend liberty while intensifying domination'? But that would be another seminar or, as they say, another movie.

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Music

Andrew Clements

Capitals

Stockhausen *Festival Hall/Radio 3*
Finnissy *Festival Hall*

Time was that Stockhausen was a familiar visitor to London. As lecturer and conductor, his presence added an undeniable excitement to the numerous performances of his music put on, principally, by the BBC and the English Bach Festival. Then he seemed all set to become the definitive Great Composer of his generation, an attractive creative personality who bore all the trappings of authentic genius. Many of the more inspiriting events of the early 1970s were his doing: the first performances in Britain of *Mantra* and *Stimmung,* and the intuitive pieces for his own ensemble; most memorable and thrilling of all, the presentation in 1973 of *Momente,* which in a single evening seemed to revitalise our notions of music theatre and banish any lingering doubts about the ability of post-serial music to sustain large spans of argument.

More recently, however, we have seen him less often, and have rather lost touch with the direction of his work. He has continued as prolific as ever, but the grander conceptions are difficult and expensive to mount effectively and we have had to be content with more modest pieces. In those, increasingly, whimsy and self-indulgence have tended to obscure imagination. Stockhausen's desire to universalise everything, while placing himself at its centre, may yield extraordinarily original results on the largest scale, but in a work for soloist or small group seems merely pretentious. So the Philharmonia's decision to programme the first British performance of a recent orchestral work, *JUBILEE,* was timely, and should be welcome not just because any sort of premiere is a rare event from one of the independent London symphony orchestras.

But *JUBILEE* — the capitals are apparently *de rigueur* — proved to be less important and ambitious than might have been hoped. Stockhausen's main preoccupation in the last few years has been the planning and composition of a 'mega-opera', a project that is intended to outdo even Wagner in its ambition. When finished it will consist of seven full-length musico-dramatic works to be presented on successive evenings. So far two days' worth has been completed. Beside such cosmic undertakings the 15-minute orchestral score is insignificant, written to a commission from the Hanover Opera House early in 1977. It's intended, says the composer, to be 'festive, spectacular, full of confidence'; it certainly succeeds in that aim, and is also by a long way the most approachable of Stockhausen's pieces for orchestra. The programme note for the Philharmonia concert gave an exhaustive breakdown of its construction from a single 15-note formula and four instrumental layers, classified by their pitch; the layers begin out of synchronisation and move into and out of phase so that, though the formula is always present, it is continually changing in its speed and scoring.

There are moments when the mechanical procedures seem to be all that sustain the music, but equally moments that could only have been written by a great composer. The initial presentation of the formula from brass and lower strings sounds uncannily like the statue home from Messiaen's *Turangalîla Symphony,* and there are echoes of Stockhausen's former teacher all through the score. In the second half of the piece, four solo instruments detach themselves from their groups and launch themselves into increasingly elaborate cadenzas. In the Festival Hall they were scarcely audible, but in the BBC's recording of the concert broadcast two days later the balance had been adjusted and the solos given a concerto-like perspective. Heard more clearly, they gave direction to the work and a more obvious cumulative effect; without them *JUBILEE,* for all its incidental delights and immediacy, lacks the elegance of design that is so typical of Stockhausen's finest music.

When there was still money in the Arts Council's coffers, *JUBILEE* was planned to be the Philharmonia's contribution to a series of four concerts funded by the London Orchestral Concerts Board in which each of the symphony orchestras would give a first performance alongside a programme of popular favourites. The funding was withdrawn and only two of the four orchestras decided to proceed with the plan. Besides the Stockhausen work, the London Philharmonic gave the first performance of Michael Finnissy's *Sea and Sky* in a concert with Grieg's Piano Concerto and *Pictures from an Exhibition.* Short of including the *1812 Overture* complete with mortar and cannon effects, it's difficult to imagine a more popular programme.

Born in 1946, Finnissy is both prolific and widely played. The London Sinfonietta gave the first performance of a major work for chamber orchestra during its recent Smith Square series and smaller-scale pieces often crop up in the programmes of many of the specialist contemporary ensembles. I confess that until now his music has made little impression on me. The exactness with which the scores are notated seems to jar against the rather generalised effects that they make on the ear, and the aesthetic of presenting the performer with technical problems that are quite beyond the scope of present-day proficiency is too often of merely cosmetic value. *Sea and Sky* does not by any means solve all the problems, but by transferring them to the wider, more diffuse canvas of the symphony orchestra, it makes them less palpable. The composer warns against taking the title to imply an impressionistic nature piece — 'The words "sea" and "sky" describe two large and generalised areas of reality'. The result is a single movement some 18 minutes long, with two massive climaxes and tightly controlled crescendos. It's an ambitious piece, demanding striking ideas to flesh out its ground plan, but only occasionally does the invention manage to fulfil expectations. Finnissy finds it easy to generate a noisy orchestral tutti, but the sound is too impersonal and ill-defined to bear close scrutiny. But some of the smaller details in *Sea and Sky* — an explosive, self-generating clarinet solo, for example — have a genuine imaginative force. When those powerful moments can be fused into a coherent whole Finnissy is likely to write a major work.

Television

Julian Barnes

Wonky Knee

'Terribly bored by Maugham's new play,' wrote James Agate in his diary after the first night of *Sheppey* in 1933,

> ... bored not only because it was common but because it all seemed hopelessly beside the point. Maugham was out to prove that 'a man who tried to live like Jesus Christ today would be certified as mad and put into a lunatic asylum.' That statement seems to me to be so foolish as to be almost meaningless.

The following day Agate discussed the play with Sir Cedric Hardwicke, and sagely pronounced to him that 'an author who is indignant because Christ's commandments are not kept could be convincing only if the whole body of his work had been an argument for Christ.'

Is it possible to get a play more wrong than this? And is it surprising, if this is how the dean of critics saw *Sheppey,* that Maugham decided shortly afterwards to give up the theatre? 'Common' is, of course, one of those self-condemning epithets, but even for 1933 its use seems amazing: if *Sheppey,* featuring a barber's family plus three low-life extras (a whore, a thief, and Death herself), is 'common', then huge chunks of Shakespeare — to go no further — are common too. The idea that only a Christian has the right to regret the withering of Christian virtues is quaint indeed, as is the naive assumption that Sheppey's 'indignation' is automatically Maugham's.

Odder still, though — if possible — is Agate's basic contention about the present-day reaction to someone trying to live like Christ, offering money, shelter and food to those in need. Religion, after all, is tolerated and even mildly popular in Western society in some considerable part because it allows people to live roughly the same sort of lives they would choose to live if it didn't exist. Someone

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who converts nowadays to one of the property-approving churches is not thought outlandish, though he or she may be judged a little delicate; whereas someone who becomes a Moonie or a Buddhist (or, in the present instance, a fundamental Christian) and discards all property, is generally considered either touched or got at. Pools winners who spend, spend, spend on cars and husbands are the social norm; those who dispense pound notes from park benches are deemed crackers — and if they were to start selling the roof from over their family's heads, then the law, and possibly the medical profession too, might well intervene.

Maugham was always sharply wise about property; and his play, revived in a splendid *Festival* production (BBC-1), locates this wonky knee of religion and kicks it hard. *Sheppey* is less about religious conversion (after the barber's Damascus Road on the shop floor, he becomes a stubborn catalyst rather than a developing character) than about the responses of materialists to those spiritual impulses which impinge on their lives: there is the resigned but troubled wife; the acidly grabby daughter who prays 'Oh God make them [the doctors] say he's potty'; and the Mosleyite fiancé-in-law (played with plausibly whining logic by Simon Rouse) who pedantically clarifies the function of Doctors of Divinity — 'They're there to explain that whatever Jesus said, he didn't really mean; he meant something else'. Baffling them all was the incomparably good Bob Hoskins as Sheppey: full of civility and bounce in the opening scenes, plumping up his customers' jowls in a proprietorial, chef-like way; slow and troubled at the end in the bold (and successful) colloquy with Death.

Victoria Wood's Maureen in *Nearly a Happy Ending* (Granada) was another character trying unsuccessfully to dispense charity: the alms in this case being her virginity, which she has resolved to dispose of as soon as she reaches 'target weight' (like critical mass, one assumes) at her slimmers' class. Her hitherto partnerless life was neatly implied in the opening shot: the stick-on name-strip on her car windscreen has MAUREEN over the driver's seat and a blank blue expanse over the passenger seat. Miss Wood is a perfomer of chunky, swivel-eyed charm, and some of her cracks lingered ('Foreplay — we don't have to — we can do it afterwards if you like'). But the whackiness of this two-hander was often rather hard-driven — reminding me a bit of that Swinging Sixties film *Smashing Time* — and the songs, with the exception of a stylish and funny Businessman's Blues (sung as by a barbershop quartet) were musically unmemorable. It was a jolly play, as enjoyable and forgettable as a university revue.

This, by the way, was the week when Russell Harty returned to the fold. The BBC may have lost its live music; it may have been badly creamed by ITV in the Knightsbridge siege; but at least it's recaptured The Lip. How difficult it is not to have a soft spot for old Russell (indeed, it might be one of the basic tests for humane feeling: if you can harden your heart to Harty, then you're lost), especially when he's wandering uneasily through rickety shows like *The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition* (BBC-2). The idea was to get seven quasi-celebrities to wander round the Victor Lowndes private collection and make a bridge between the viewer and Art: Russell's expression of panicky doubt as Chelsea goalkeeper Petar Borota brokenly expatiated on the nude sculpture he admired — 'I like her body' was the most comprehensible of his charming comments — had to be seen to be believed. Borota's other choice (they were allowed two each) was of a nude male; Clive Dunn chose two female nudes, one terracotta and one painted; Joanna Lumley chose a nude bronze; and so on. They may not have known much about art, but they knew what they liked about nudity. Best — and most Hartyish — comment came at the end, when Sir Hugh Casson introduced a small, dauby but agreeable self-portrait by Rodrigo Moynihan. 'Hmmm,' murmured the Lip cheekily, 'looks a bit like Arthur Marshall.' And so he did.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Where the Fool Flourishes

John Bull's Other Island by SHAW *Greenwich*
Random Moments in a May Garden by JAMES SAUNDERS *Orange Tree, Richmond*
Livingstone and Sechele by DAVID POWNALL *Lyric, Hammersmith*

Alan Strachan's revival of the play at the Mermaid eight years ago first aroused the suspicion, and his retooled production three miles downstream confirms it. *John Bull's Other Island* may not be as funny as *Arms and the Man,* or as touching as *St Joan,* or as far-sighted as *Heartbreak House,* or as long as *Back to Methuselah,* or as tempting to the librettist as *Pygmalion;* but it is Shaw's most interesting play, the one in which he indulges all his talent as paradise, paradoxer and *agent provocateur* and, at the same time, reveals more of himself than anywhere else.

How could it be otherwise, when it was his sole dramatic excursion back to the country where he endured a loveless upbringing and a bungled education, and from which he gratefully escaped as soon as the ginger hair began to sprout from his chin? By 1904, when the play was first performed, Shaw had become the smiling, impenetrable crustacean who daunted his contemporaries and still slightly intimidates us. You would have had to boil him alive to make him admit to feeling personal pain. Yet he was also the child who had been rejected by his mother, and the man who had rejected his mother-country. Somewhere inside that shell there were still a few nerves that could be wincingly triggered by memory; and, needless to say, they had Irish roots.

The very first scene introduces us to a character as feckless as Shaw's own father, and with some of the same traits, notably a tendency to condemn booze while downing it in spectacular quantities; and no sooner is he chased offstage than he and his ilk are being ringingly denounced by the play's principal Irishman, the expatriate engineer Larry Doyle. He talks of the dullness, the bigotry, the beauty, the sadness, the poverty, the hopelessness of his native country. He talks of 'the dreaming, the dreaming, the torturing, heart-scalding, never satisfying dreaming, dreaming, dreaming, dreaming', and of the eternal chaffing, taunting, deriding, the 'horrible, senseless, mischievous laughter'.

Shaw himself was not, of course, altogether free of this last vice; and it may be significant that the actor at this point is asked to 'drop his voice, like a man making some shameful confidence'. Indeed, most of the stage-directions in this speech seem unwontedly upbeat: 'with sudden anguish', 'going off into a passionate dream', 'savagely', 'bitterly', 'with fierce shivering self-contempt'. At Greenwich Tony Doyle spits it all out like a man who has compensated for one of Ireland's better-known deficiencies by acquiring himself a snake and using it for a tongue.

Christopher Benjamin plays his British associate Broadbent, as he did at the Mermaid, and does even more than then to humanise what's already four-fifths caricature: a sentimentalist who falls patronisingly in love with Ireland while preparing to exploit it in the name of laissez-faire and business efficiency, an insensitive chump with a high opinion of his own political wisdom, a humourless chauvinist who boasts of his sense of humour and his internationalism, a hypocrite who despises hypocrisy, and (in short) Shaw's archetypal Englishman. Off the two of them go to the Emerald Isle, to further the interests of their 'Land Development Syndicate' and to meet, among other people, an ex-priest called Keegan, who proceeds to speak of the world with what Shaw himself is generally supposed to have lacked, a sense of horror. It is, he says,

> very clearly a place of torment and penance, a place where the fool flourishes and the good and wise are hated and persecuted; a place where men and women torture one another in the name of love; where children are scourged and enslaved in the name of parental duty and education; where the weak in body are poisoned and mutilated in the name of healing, and the weak in character are put to the horrible torture of imprisonment, not for hours but for years, in the name of justice ...

So the sepulchral litany continues, culminating in Keegan's definition of the planet Earth as 'hell' and his declaration, 'from the very depths of his nature', that he feels out of place upon it. At Greenwich, P. G. Stephens plays the part from the very depths of a serenity that verges on lightheadedness; but, even so, it's a uniquely sombre moment in Shaw's oeuvre. It sounds a note of spiritual revulsion that I suspect Shaw could have touched only on an imaginative trip to the land of the saints and of his own private nightmares.

Altogether, it's a strange, troubling piece, charged with a sense both of loss and of exasperated rediscovery; and Mr Strachan's production, though generally good, left me itching to see an even better one. The play has obviously dated in surface respects, yet much

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more so when its Englishman is waffling of free trade and Gladstone than when specifically Irish problems are being mooted. After all, absentee landlordism, foreclosure of mortgages, eviction of tenantry and the like are not altogether matters of the past; and Broadbent's plan to replace farmland with a hotel, a golf-course and whatever else might appeal to the international investor and playboy seems very much a matter of the present.

What's really interesting, though, is that Larry Doyle, always the voice of Shavian realism in the play, ends up by wishing precisely this living death upon his homeland. Anything rather than wasted youths, stunted minds, and endless 'drudging over clods and pigs', anything rather than fine talk, dreams and laughter. After *John Bull's Other Island* Shaw dedicated himself once more to his self-appointed task of teaching sense, responsibility and good government to the English; and did not look back, or west, again. He simply could not cope with Ireland.

Samuel Beckett once said that his only purpose was to 'leave a stain upon the silence'. Some such thought has preoccupied James Saunders, too, from his *Next Time I'll Sing to You,* about the seemingly pointless life and death of a hermit, to his recent *Bodies,* which managed to suggest there might be a meaning in agonisedly floundering about in search of a meaning. He is the only English dramatist who permits his perspectives to be defined by thoughts of mortality, the only one to ask how we should live, and why, when the Grim Reaper is lurking at the bottom of the garden.

Indeed, at the bottom of his *May Garden,* in which two Victorian girls sit and muse about their family and futures while, in a sort of dramatic counterpoint, a modern middle-aged couple throw a rather earnest dinner-party. The table conversation turns to the brevity of existence, extinction, meaning and meaninglessness: 'I don't see the point of living,' smiles the genial hostess, summing up the bleaker view on show, 'I'm not unhappy, but I don't see the necessity.' The living (it appears) are thinking of death, the dead of living; and both halves of the play end in the taking of a group photo, which is all the dead now are and the living soon will be. Melancholy stuff, which left the tweedy, no-nonsense side of me wishing that the lad Saunders would abandon these morbid thoughts and settle to something constructive, and a quieter side respecting his seriousness and sensitivity and remembering that transience has, after all, always been a permissible poetic theme. And if for poets, why not for dramatists?

Briefly, *Livingstone and Sechele* confronts the missionary and his wife, all dry sanctimony, with the leader of the Crocodile people and his fifth wife, all astuteness, articulacy and passion. The result lacks Pownall's usual theatrical ingenuity, not to mention momentum, subtlety and richness. We can, of course, easily share the author's indignation at the arrogance of obliging a man to convert to Christianity and divorce his loved-one in order to get armed help against rampaging Boers: but what's the point, at this late date in our history?

Moreover, Peter Kelly plays Livingstone with a mean fanaticism that would surely leave his most sceptical biographer boggling. Anni Domingo, Joe Marcell and Jennifer Piercey play the remaining characters more from their own points of view; but the sum is still disappointment.

Films

John Coleman

Child Psychology

Forget Venice (X) *Academy Two*
A Slave of Love (A) *Gate Two*
Long Shot (AA) *and* **La Commare Secca (AA)** *Everyman*
All Quiet on the Western Front (A) *Empire*

Franco Brusati, film director and playwright, has a way with awards: he wins them. His *Bread and Chocolate,* with a fine performance from Nino Manfredi as the middle-aged Italian struggling to make good in German-speaking Switzerland, was internationally accoladed and finally turned up, at the Gate Two, last October. Now we have *Forget Venice,* winner of the Italian equivalent of an Oscar for the best film of its year as well as a couple of prizes for best direction, and forgive my heavy breathing. Using such excellent actors as Erland Josephson and Mariangela Melato, setting them and others in and around a charming old country house in the province of Venezia, mixing a lot of memory with a little desire, Brusati has produced the archetypal art-house movie, its impasto surface worked up to disguise a creative nervelessness.

Martha, an ageing, ailing, bewigged beauty, once a famous opera singer, has living with her an adopted niece, Anna, and Anna's shy young friend and lover, Claudia. Martha's brother, Nicky (Josephson), brings *his* young male lover and partner, 'Pug' — they restore vintage cars in Milan — down on a visit. The point about Anna and Nicky is that they have refused to grow up, be their ages: at least, one takes that to be the point, since there is no other available and the film wastes no time in affording each in turn a lengthy flashback to crucial childhood interludes. Further scattered flashbacks (to Anna's sexy, deserted mother; to Nicky's recollection of a laughing, girlish Martha being entertained by papa, where a magic crystal ball figures) continue the penny-Freud past motivations for their present immaturity.

It is all devilishly neat. Anna-as-girl persuades little Claudia to throw darts and eggs at a blown-up photo of Anna's parents, a defaced portrait to crop up later. Martha's death tidily persuades Nicky to grow up and an image of striking banality has him staying behind when the rest leave, finding that 'magic' globe in the grass, letting it roll against a tree, where it shatters. Add to this a masculine full frontal, a choreographed family dinner al fresco at a neighbouring inn, and a terrific tastefulness about insisted-on facts of life and death (Claudia's menstrual blood rosily mingling with water in a shower; a trickle of pee from slumped Martha; elegant dabs of scarlet on windscreen, etc., of a Thirties car after a chicken has been run over), and one would seem to have a sound quota of prize-winning ingredients. And *around* the two stunned adults, an earthy Italian ration of sexual frolicking (nude washerwomen, Nicky's randy boyhood chum now balding but randy as ever) is there to tickle the fancy. The mind is hardly catered for.

Odder yet, but meatier, is Nikita Mikhalkov's four-year-old *A Slave of Love,* which affectionately sets out to recreate the tribulations of a silent film company back in 1917 during a Crimean summer, out to make the melodrama of the title, short of film stock and caught between White Guard thugs and secret revolutionaries. The lovely wide-eyed star (Elena Solovey), falling for the handsome blond cameraman (Rodion Nakhapetov), finds herself holding on to a clandestine reel of military atrocities when her beloved is shot. The languid, yet fraught atmosphere of the period is sometimes wonderfully done, though weirdly infiltrated by stylised close-ups that might have come from the film-within-a-film and marred by erratic Sovcolor and an illogical recourse to black and white for some sequences. A stunning last image leaves the bewildered beauty abandoned in a dwindling yellow tram while horsemen gallop beside the rails in pursuit. Now may we please have Mikhalkov's *Unfinished Piece for a Mechanical Piano* (1977) and *Oblomov* (1979)?

The excellent Everyman is embarking on an occasional policy of premiering films hitherto unseen by the general public. Bertolucci's *La Commare Secca* (1962), made from a Pasolini story, may be chiefly of historic interest today — the director's first feature at 21, after assisting on Pasolini's *Accattone* — but there is no denying a certain raw strength to this bleak tale of a prostitute's murder and various suspects, or to the exploration of that sleazy, derelict landscape outside Rome so favoured by Pasolini. *His* influence may be felt in a fairly pervasive homosexual orientation, even where not explicit. The hazards of working with non-professional actors provide vivid embarrassments (notably, two giggling lads): the whole wears better than I expected.

Maurice Hatton's *Long Shot,* largely compiled at the 1977 Edinburgh Film Festival, strums some merry new tunes on a shoestring — it loosely groups itself round the attempt to set up a movie to be called *Gulf and Western* and based on the Abderdonian oilfields — while reverting to the threadbare Godardian procedures of, say, *Une Femme est Une Femme* in doing so: chapter headings, an impromptu dance, talking to camera. The result might reasonably be described as, at worst, ramshackle and overly amused with itself. Wim Wenders, John Boorman, the distributor David Stone (of The Gate, Notting Hill), and an amiable bloke at Fox are among those who talk to the Scottish producer Charlie (the Scottish film-maker Charles Gormley) and sometimes to scriptwriter Neville (the scriptwriter Neville Smith); and it is possible to glean a bemused sense of the difficulties in financing a domestic product, and the concomitant trimming expected, from all this.

However, a serious document on the plight of British cinema was surely not intended and it is best to lean back and let the in-jokes, and a handful of first-rate jokes more widely ac-

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cessible, roll on. There is a delicious girl called Ann Zelda who does nothing much with great cool and conviction, Susannah York chatting downwards to Neville from a *Peter Pan* harness, Stephen Frears as a fellow in biscuits off whom a lift is bummed, and Jim Haines as 'a professor of Sexual Politics at the Sorbonne'. The waiting-for-Sam-Fuller gag is a running bore, but there is a splendidly silly episode watching a Mel Calman 90-seconder *with* Mel Calman at the NFT which is worth plenty. Delbert Mann's expensive-looking remake of *All Quiet on the Western Front* must be the least necessary film in some time.

Weekend Competition

No 2620 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

After the recent limerick comp, can clerihews be far behind? Let's have some about holiday resorts: anywhere from Ilfracombe to Ibiza, from Bexhill to Bermuda, concentrating on the attraction (or lack of it) for a holiday. Up to five tries each, by 20 June.

No 2617 **Set by Mrs C. Goddard**

Extracts from job advertisements or prospectuses for careers as a member of the SAS, a cabinet minister in the present government, TV critic of the NS or professional brothel-keeper.

Report **By Jeff Squiffy**

Does nobody have a kind word for Julian Barnes? Some of the ads for his job were downright venomous (I've sent him a list of offenders, on whom he will doubtless avenge himself in due course) and many were actionable: a mysteriously common mistake was the belief that he has a fondness for the bottle. The SAS entries included some goodish lines ('Auditions Wednesday next, shooting starts Thursday' — M. R. Miller) but a disappointingly high number of the brothel ads relied entirely on rather shop-soiled puns ('must be able to take things lying down' and so on). Among the invitations to join Maggie's gang the only one to make the grade was J. H. Bentley's marvellous extended *double entendre*. One smacker for Miller and six each for Bentley, Sharpless (back from his hols) and the other winners.

If you can watch the box from morn till close-down
Without becoming hopelessly square-eyed,
Are ready to appreciate what goes down
With highbrows, yet take *Dallas* in your stride;

If you can sound as learned as a schoolman,
And now and then drop some distinguished names,
Be hypercritical as Milton Schulman,
And even half as witty as Clive James;

If neither sex nor violence provokes you,
And you fling Whitehouse pleas back in her teeth,
If threat of censorship's the thing that chokes you,
Yet you respect the towering shade of Reith;

If you can watch the cute, the crass, the soppy,
The searing epic and the load of crap,
And turn it into scintillating copy —
The NS TV job is yours, old chap.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Can you Minister to my needs? I am a mature, attractive, and hygienic lady (own teeth) with a second residence in London, seeking refined, executive-type gents with modern tastes. (Due vacancies in existing clientele.) I offer variety of interesting positions — but no games or continental stunts — and can be generous with the right persons. I am fully experienced in delicate discussions, have an extensive wardrobe of exciting and provocative outfits, and also run a good party. I am strict, even dominant (occasional use of whips), and demand obedience, but can be understanding. Professional gents with attractive wives sought — womenfolk would appreciate rapping with tall, clean presentable husband. Discretion assured, and demanded of genuine long-stayers (some late-night sessions). No wets or time-wasters please. Husband approves.

J. H. BENTLEY

A TV critic is required for the NEW STATESMAN. As we are a socialist weekly, the person we are looking for will probably have a public-school/Oxbridge background like the majority of his predecessors. We say 'his' advisedly, for no woman has ever held the post; and although applications from women will be particularly welcome, they will, of course, be disregarded. A civilised, eloquent political maverick a shade to the left of Arthur Marshall is what we're after. Perhaps it would be simpler to double Julian Barnes's fee; but then that's our problem, isn't it?

TIM HOPKINS

Applications are invited for post of Senior Resident Madamperson at fully redecorated DHSS Orderly House (St James Sub-district). Scale-*III* post, Inner-London Allowance. (Opening of this newly-equipped establishment entailed by closure of similar, which, being sited between Cunninghams and Aer-Lingus, occasioned jokes in poor taste.) Suitable applicant should be *au fait* socially; interviewers will be alert for gaffes, i.e. holding knife like a pencil or pouring milk in first. Working knowledge of such commonly-met conditions as Flacciditas Episcopalis (Bishop's Droop) or Backbencher's Syndrome (Hintersitzplatz-hemmungen) a distinct advantage, likewise an ability to rustle up dianty teas *en negligee*.

JIMMIE PEARSE

Do you long for power without responsibility? Are you secretly ashamed of your face and anxious to hide it? Did they give you a gun and refuse to let you use it? Have you failed to reach the top of your trade or profession owing to lack of education, nervousness about your accent or inability to get on with the right people? Do you wish to get even with foreigners, intellectuals, people who have made their mark, people who use violence, good conversationalists and radicals?

If you can honestly answer 'Yes' to these questions there may be a career for you in the SAS as a highly trained agent of HM Government. No doors will be closed to you, no possibilities for displaying initiative denied, and no person, however exalted, will refuse to do your bidding. Ring the number below, in confidence, and ask 'Charlie' for the number to ring.

PETER ALEXANDER

The NEW STATESMAN is looking for a new television critic. No previous experience is necessary, but those who have written on this medium in (say) the *Sunday Times* may receive preferential treatment. The successful applicant will have a particular interest in sport, and be gifted with irreverent wit: It may be an advantage to have written a column for the NEW STATESMAN before — on Sport, for instance — but this is not essential. The new critic must be a graduate, perhaps of Cambridge University; a moustache may be an advantage; he may be asked to double as a cartoonist. Friendship or previous collaboration with Clive James will not disqualify any applicant. To keep up the tone of the magazine, applicants should possess one name — perhaps the forename — in common with a well-known philosopher. Wittgenstein, for instance. Or Russell, or some such. No candidates by the name of Harty, however.

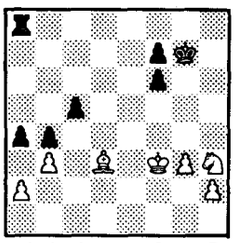
BILL GREENWELL

Tony Miles

Chess

No 183 **Problem 166**

Problem 166 was the fascinating ending of the game Belyausky-Dolmatow from the last USSR championship. In the diagram position at first sight Black looks to be in trouble since his rook cannot readily penetrate the white position. For example 1 . . . R-R1; 2.N-B2, PxP; 3.PxP, RxP; 4.N-K4 and White should win. Thus the rook needs an open file so Black gives it one with 1 . . . P-B5!! 2. BxP (on



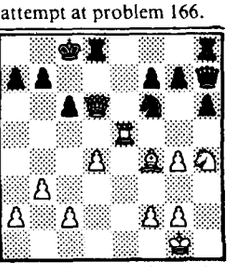
2.PxP Black has a pleasant choice between 2 . . . R-QN1 and 2 . . . P-N6. One possibility is . . . P-N6; 3.PxP, P-R6; 4.B-N1, R-K1! 5.K-B2, R-KR1! 6.K-N2, R-Q1! with decisive penetration), R-QB1! (threatening . . . RxB; 4.PxR, P-N6; 5.PxP, P-R6); 3.B-Q3, P-R6! and now White, faced with the threat of R-B8-QR8, had to seal his move. In fact he played the plausible but inaccurate 4.K-K3 and after . . . R-B8 (. . . R-B6; 5.N-B2!) 5.N-B4, R-QR8; 6.N-Q5, RxP; 7.NxNP, RxP; 8.B-K2, R-R6 (if . . . R-R8; 9.K-Q2, R-R8; 10.N-B2, R-QN8; 11.K-B3 is less clear); 9.K-B2, P-B4! 10.N-R2, P-B5; 11.PxP, RxP; 12.B-B4, R-R6; 13.B-B1? (correct was 13.K-K2 heading for the Q side with reasonable drawing chances) R-R7ch; 14.B-N2, K-B3; 15.K-N3, R-R4! 16.B-B1, R-QB4! 17.B-Q3, R-Q4; 18.B-R6, R-Q7; 19.B-B4, R-Q5 and White resigned since 20.B-Q3 is impossible (. . . R-Q6ch)and on 20.B-R6, K-B4 and the Black king enters the fray with decisive effect. Much more interesting though is 4.N-B2! R-B8 (here if . . . R-B6; 5.K-K3, RxP? 6.N-Q1! and the rook is trapped eg 6 . . . RxBch; 7.KxR, P-N6; 8.N-B3! or 6 . . . R-N7; 7.NxR, P-N6! 8.B-N1! winning); 5.P-R4! (it is vital to preserve this pawn as will be seen later) R-QR8 (if . . . P-B4!? 6.BxP, R-B6ch — or R-QR8; 7.N-Q3, RxP; 8.NxP, R-QN7; 9.B-B2, P-R7; 10.NxP, RxB; 11.N-N4 draws — 7.K-B4, RxQNP; 8.N-Q1! again); 6.B-B4, RxP; 7.N-Q3, R-B7ch (if . . . R-Q7; 8.NxP, P-R7; 9.NxP holds); 8.KxR, P-R7; 9.NxP, P-R8=Q; 10.N-Q3 and White will continue with N-B4, B-Q5 and K-N2 with an impenetrable fortress and a draw.

Surprisingly White could also have tried 4.N-B4 with a similar idea: 4 . . . R-B6 (now if . . . R-B8? 5.N-Q5!); 5.P-R4! RxP; 6.PxR, P-R7; 7.B-B4, P-R8=Q; 8.K-N2 with the same ending except that Black keeps his QNP but probably he still cannot win.

The fascinating aspect of all this is that, in a way, the two minor pieces seem to function better against a queen than a rook. A remarkale endgame! February prizewinners:— First, Mr J. D. Taylor (£14); second, Mr S. Sahasrabudhe (£10); third equal Messrs Bradley, McSheehy and Thorat (£7 each) and a consolation prize of £5 to Mr Friedgood primarily for his excellent attempt at problem 166.

Problem 183

White to play. how should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 18 June.



Solution to problem 180

1.Q-Q8ch! K-N2 (or . . . BxQ; 2.R-R1 regaining the Q a clear piece ahead); 2.QxB, QxQ; 3.PxP and with RN + B and an attack for the Q White won easily.

Solution to problem 181

1.R-Q7!! and if . . . KxR; 2.QxRch is murder and . . . RxR: 2.QxB is mate — the mate in two that Korchnoi missed! (He played 1.R-B6? and drew!)

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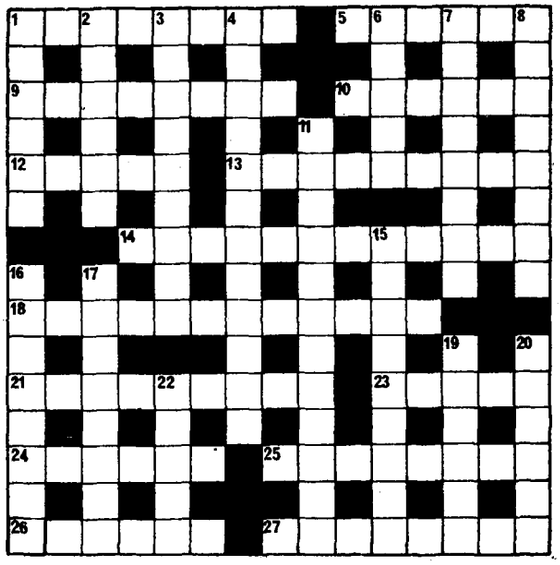
Weekend Crossword 1345

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1345, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 17 June.



ACROSS

1 Speech to help being returned by the people (8).
5 Poetic version of a raid taking place in ancient times (6).
9 Not a brief innings for a cricketer? (8).
10 Prevent a Scotsman being lightweight (6).
12 Festival without a second consumer (5).
13 Relishes sins being reformed among the lowest (9).
14 Take leave of the mind, it being the ministry's concern (12).
18 Where affection is felt for series of masculine skills (12).
21 God and animal given about a hundred for rich man (9).
23 Features of scenery provided for famous actors (5).
24 Endlessly producing fruit (6).
25 One of the dull sounds that jar most on one (8).
26 Shoot back and obtain some gold (6).
27 Insisted on red seats being redistributed (8).

DOWN

1 Almost the dimmest American statesman (6)
2 A number go in an entrance used for relatives (6)
3 Rising again with most of the others pressing (9).
4 Men of the air discover traces hidden in the water (12).
6 Collect for a service (5).
7 Letter returned in time to explode (8).
8 Garment for one swallowed by river fish (8).
11 Sticking to the rules, being among the potentially senior, but there are limits (12).
15 Dance since oarsmen love me (9).
16 Third party present when you have tea with a former president (9).
17 Developing town featured in magazine (8).
19 Account for noise (6).
20 When making a foreign port change notes before starting to depart (6).
22 She has to exist on nothing (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to Salamanca 30

D	R	E	I	C	H	E	N	B	A	C	H			
I	M	A	G	O		O	T	O	O	T	O	O		
O	O	N	S	M	L	U	R	M	A	S	U			
G	R	I	S	F	A	M	I	L	Y	P	I	S		
E	I	N	E	P	E	R	A	C	U	T	E			
N	A	W	A	T	S	O	N	R	U	E	S			
E	R	A	S	H	U	D	S	O	N	R	U			
S	T	A	T	U	A	R	Y	F	E	A	R			
C	Y	R	E	N	R	A	P	T	A	T	G			
L	A	I	R	D	U	U	O	K	N	E	E			
U	N	S	E	E	N	N	O	U	T	D	O			
B	A	K	E	R	S	T	R	E	E	T	N			

The theme of the puzzle: Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories. Salamanca's apologies: Clue 1 down should have started '32, say . . .'

Prizewinners
Ms D. Basset (Bideford)
D. Penny (Woking)
Gareth Walton (Birmingham)

Appointments

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARINGEY
COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING SERVICE APPLICATIONS/ADVICE

Housing Centre Officer
£4,971-£6,174 Inclusive
AP3 or AP4

Do you have the ability and enthusiasm to help members of the public tackle their housing problems?

The Housing Action Centre is part of Haringey's Comprehensive Housing Service, and the post forms part of a team of busy caseworkers who aim to provide a range of housing options, by for instance carrying out housing aid work. Additionally the Housing Action Centre works closely with the Housing Emergency Group to assist people threatened with homelessness and interviews personal callers about their applications for Council housing. Experienced caseworkers are expected to undertake specialist functions and to develop an area of expertise.

Experience of work in landlord/tenant legislation, repair problems, house purchase or related fields would be advantageous but not essential. More importantly we are seeking applicants who can take a broad but objective view, and have the stamina to survive hard work and pressure.

Send Addressed Envelope for Application Form and Job Description to: **Chief Admin. Officer, 13/27 Station Road, Wood Green, N.22.** Closing Date **13.6.80.**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LICENSED HOUSE MANAGERS

Vacancy
Assistant General Secretary

A vacancy exists for the position of Assistant General Secretary for a small Trade Union of some 17,000 members, involved in the Licensed Trade.

The applicant should have experience in Trade Union duties, including organisation, negotiating at national level, office administration, dealing with the media and knowledge of Parliamentary procedures.

For details and application form please apply to:
The National Secretary, NALHM, 9 Coombe Lane, Raynes Park, London SW20 8NE.

Marking the envelope **"Private and Confidential"**

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: MONDAY 30 JUNE 1980

Trainee Residential Social Workers

Each year Ealing looks for men and women at least 20 years old and with sufficient educational requirements for entry to a course for professional qualification, who have the application, aptitudes, sensitivity and stamina for a career in the demanding and specialist residential aspect of social work within a local authority setting.

The training programme begins in mid-September. It affords practical experience within our range of residential establishments for children, for the mentally handicapped, for the mentally ill and for elderly clients. The programme also includes regular group training days and individual professional supervision.

Trainees are normally expected to be non resident although those appointed will be required to experience the residential worker's normal pattern of duty; this means working early and late shifts and taking part in sleeping in or waking night duties.

A commitment of one year to the residential division of the department is expected upon successful completion of the trainee programme.

Starting salary is £2,820 p.a. plus London Weighting of £390 p.a. if non-resident or £228 if resident.

For an informal discussion telephone Mary Stratton (01-579 2424 ext 2653).

For further written information, job description and application form contact the Personnel Office, Room A202 Town Hall Annexe, New Broadway, Ealing W5 2BY (Tel 01-579 2424 Ext 3350). Please quote the reference 219SS. Closing date for applications is 20.6.80. 24 hour Ansaphone 01-840 1995.

Ealing
London Borough

GINGERBREAD
(The Association for One Parent Families)

is looking for someone with substantial admin/clerical experience to be responsible for the records and paperwork of over 350 self-help groups.

The post requires a person who is efficient, helpful, friendly and able to use their own initiative in an interesting but overworked office.

Salary range: £4,134 - £5,202 p.a. inc.

Closing date **20 June.**

Further details and application forms from **Gingerbread, 35 Wellington St, London WC2. Tel: 01-240 0953.**

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION
requires a
WELFARE AND RESEARCH OFFICER

Duties will include the servicing and co-ordination of the Union's Welfare Dept. and Education Office, and advising individual students and student agencies.

Experience of welfare rights work and a knowledge of student unions is desirable.

Salary on a scale related to Admin. 1B. £4,402-5,725.

Deadline for completed applications **18 June 1980.** Write or telephone for application form to: **The General Secretary, Lancaster University Students' Union, Bailrigg, Lancaster LA1 4YT. Tel: 0524 63352.**

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computing

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It is one of a group of highly successful business papers, including *Campaign*, *Datalink* and *Management Today* published by the Haymarket group.
Salary in accordance with age and experience.

Please apply to Dr Alan Cane, Editor, *Computing*, 53/55 Frith Street, London W1A 2HG.
Tel: 01-437 9588.

NACRO

COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

We are seeking a **Development Officer** to join the existing and well established team which is developing services for persistent juvenile offenders to reduce the use of residential care and custody.

The team is funded by the DHSS until January 1982 and is at present working with seven Social Services Departments.

Applicants should have experience of intermediate treatment, juveniles and the criminal justice system and be prepared to work in a team involved in original and demanding work.

Secondments from Probation Service or Social Services would be welcomed.

Salary: £7,200 p.a. + £780 London Weighting Allowance.

Job Description and Application Form from: **Robert Beech, Secretary, NACRO, 169 Clapham Road, London SW9 0PU.**

Closing Date: **4 July 1980.**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE CARE AND RESETTLEMENT OF OFFENDERS

INNER CITY HOUSING

SOLON

Housing Association

require workers for three new posts, to work in collectively run office in Lambeth. We need a development co-ordinator to manage our building programme; a co-op education worker who would also develop short-life use of housing in Lambeth; and a housing manager to work in two portfolio rehabilitation schemes. Salary: £6,048 (under review).

Full details from:

SOLON, 381 Clapham Road, SW9. 01-274 9999/0

COLEG HARLECH

Residential College for Adult Education

Warden

Applications are invited for the post of WARDEN of this long-term residential college for mature students, tenable from 1 October 1981.
The College has at present about 140 full-time students, most of whom take the two-year course for the Diploma in General Studies of the University of Wales. It also runs summer schools and short courses. It has a fine library and well-equipped theatre.
The Warden, as its Principal, is responsible for maintaining the academic standing of the College. In view of prospective unemployment and under-employment in Wales, as elsewhere, he will also be expected to take initiatives in response to this challenge.
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THE CIVIL AND PUBLIC SERVICES ASSOCIATION

Assistant Secretary Vacancy

The Civil and Public Services Association, a trade union representing members in the Civil Service, Post Office and other public bodies wishes to appoint an Assistant Secretary.

The post is of a negotiating, rather than an administrative character and the incumbent will be responsible for the progressing of policy decisions by both oral and written negotiations. The work also involves a large amount of communication with the membership.

The starting salary is £9,380 p.a. rising to £13,580 p.a. including London Weighting; the superannuation scheme is non-contributory with retirement at age 55.

Further details of the post together with an application form can be obtained from **Miss J. Douch, Personnel Officer, CPSA, Park House, 64-66 North Side, Wandsworth Common, London SW18. (01-874 0494).** Closing date for receipt of application forms is **11 July 1980.**

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

New Zealand

MANAGEMENT STUDIES — ASSOCIATE PROFESSORSHIP

Closing date: **1 August 1980**

Applications are sought from candidates with qualifications and experience as academics, consultants or business managers. Preference may be given to applicants who have major teaching research and/or practical experience in the following fields: International Marketing/Export Strategies for New Zealand; Industrial Relations/Organisation Behaviour/Management in a Trade Union Environment; Operations Management/Productivity improvement by Management Science/Operations Research; Business Policy Formulation/Financial Management/Planning and Control Systems.

Present salary scales are; Associate Professors NZ$27,466 per annum; Conditions of Appointment and Method of Application are available from all New Zealand and Australian Universities and from the Assistant Registrar (Academic Appointments), University of Auckland. Applicatons, in accordance with 'Method of Application' should be forwarded as soon as possible but not later than the closing date stated. Information also obtainable from the **Association of Commonwealth Universities (Appts), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF.**

QUEEN MARY COLLEGE

University of London

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Applications are invited for a **GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP.** Candidates should have a first or Master's degree in Economics and preference will be given to those with computing experience. Appointment from 1 October for 1 year, with possibility of extension for second year. Initial salary in range £4,402-£5,052 p.a. (under review), plus £740 London Allowance. Please apply by letter, enclosing curriculum vitae and names of 2 referees, to

The Secretary, (NS), Queen Mary College, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS,
not later than **27 June.**

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needs

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requires

PART-TIME ASSISTANT

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01-582 4040

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Publications

Marxism Today
Theoretical and discussion journal of the Communist Party

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Egypt/Talbot
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Politics, Sport and the Olympics — David Triesman
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REVIEW COPIES and others in fine condition bought by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion Street, WC1. Tel. 01-242 5822.

WORLD HISTORY. Books bought & Catalogues issued on most areas. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham, Mddx.

Cinema

SCREEN ON THE HILL. 435 3366 (opp. Belsize Park Tube). Derek Jarman's 'The Tempest' (AA) 2.55, 5.05, 7.15, 9.25.

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ALDWYCH THEATRE Royal Shakespeare Company 836 6404. Recorded booking info 836 5332. cc 379 6233 (10-6, Sats 10-4). From 11 June low price prevs Dickens' 'The Life And Adventures Of Nicholas Nickleby'. RSC also at The Warehouse in new production 'Educating Rita' by Willy Russell, from 10 June. RSC also at The Piccadilly Theatre in Pam Gems' 'Piaf' and Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman's 'Once In A Lifetime'.

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NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Othello', 'Sisterly Feelings', 'Amadeus', 'The Browning Version/Harlequinade', 'When We Are Married', Mon. 9 June 6 p.m. Lyttelton-Platform perf. Shakespeare's Sonnets 1, 'Early Days'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

Poetry

MATCHLIGHT 'British Poetry Today'. Orangery, Holland Pk. 7.15 p.m. 12 June Tambimuttu/Alan Brownjohn + Louis MacNeice (01-352 7409).

Meetings

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ICA EVENTS, The Mall, SW1. 9 June 7.30 Towards A Nuclear Future Series – Robert Jungk comes from Austria to discuss The Case For The Concerned. Tkts £1. 01-930 3647.

MR. S. M. CRETNEY, Member of the Law Commission, will give the 9th Chorley Lecture on 'The Codification of Family Law' on Wednesday 11 June 1980 *in the Founder's Room at the London School* of Economics, Houghton Street, Aldwych, London, WC2 at 5.30 p.m. Admission free without ticket.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE: Sunday lectures on religion and philosophy. Enquiries: 06285 26464.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme. Sun 8 June 8 p.m. Open Q/A Meeting 'Life, Sleep, Death'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

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Courses

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